OLD WEST

Winter, 1964 OW/K

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A PAIR OF OUTLAWS
by the Famous Western Artist and Author
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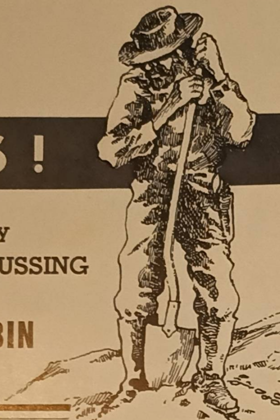
NEW! The Other World of the SUPERSTITIONS

OLD WEST

A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

Winter, 1964
VOL. 1, NO. 2

BOOK BONUS!



GOLD TRAILS of 1898

Submitted by
MARY ANNETTE TUSSING

By WILLARD DOBBIN
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SPECIAL FEATURE!

OTHER WORLD of the SUPERSTITIONS

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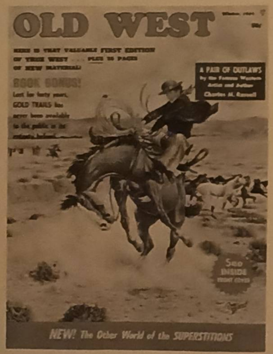

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Looks Like EVERYTHING'S HUNKY-DORY!

THE sign via our mail is "Go, man, go!" Now wouldn't I be stupid if I said the sign is "Stop!" However, I would be "extermination stupid" if I said it was "Go" when it really was "Stop" because sane publishers do not publish unpopular magazines these days—*especially without advertising!* I am not real convinced yet that sane publishers put out even popular magazines without advertising!

While we are on the subject, we might as well hit it once over lightly. We were in a rush to get the first issue out and, frankly, didn't have time to solicit advertising. Well, we have gotten so many letters highly complimenting us on putting out a magazine without advertising that we are thinking about trying it for at least a few more issues. One man wrote in to the effect that we would be the only commercial magazine in the country to operate without advertising and it would be unique to the point of utter fascination. It isn't that he has anything against advertising—he had just rather have the 16 to 20 extra pages (in most magazines the advertising runs about half) in editorial matter, such as a bonus book, etc.

There were about four letters, surprisingly, that expressed a desire for advertising—they missed it. Well, for financial reasons or otherwise, we'll probably start running advertising eventually in OLD WEST but it will never be crowded and we never intend to crowd TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES. All three magazines are primarily "reader" publications and if we can't make it on subscriptions and newsstands sales, then we just don't make it!

In the case of OLD WEST, I think most of our advertisers would be the same as are in TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES so you are getting to see them anyhow. The advertising in those magazines does make quite a difference and we surely appreciate you folks patronizing our clients. They are reporting real good results now so you must be buying right steadily from them.

This editorial is going to be like a frog hopping—sort of jumpy. I have so many subjects to cover, so many things to report on that you folks are asking about, that I am going to hit it as fast and short as possible even if I do have to hop around like a Mexican jumping bean.

It would take most of this editorial to explain completely why we got into such a rush putting out the first issue of OLD WEST. One of the best people we know, Al Martin Napoletano, drew a sketch of what he imagined it was like when we were trying to get together a new magazine in *ten days!* Commenting on the rush, Al said that I had mentioned a third magazine several times and somebody must have sent in a subscription in advance whereupon we got into a terrific rush trying to get the first issue out before he changed his mind! Al's letters and drawings are always so refreshing—you feel like you've had a bath in real clean water after hearing from him. Then you get an occasional letter from an old sourpuss and you wonder what he is getting out of life compared to Al. I am firmly convinced that some people spend most of their waking hours in a constant search for something to criticize, somebody to find fault with, and making a heroic attempt at not seeing their own faults! That is my sermon for today (I probably lead the crowd!) and so let me get on with this frog hopping.

OLD WEST came about by a steady and increasing stream of letters relative to reprinting the old issues of TRUE WEST. We knew we could not do this per se. In short, if we were to reprint the old issues of TRUE WEST *exactly* like they were, it would de-value the old copies and we'd get lynched before nightfall. We have a few letters saying they actually don't believe these old copies are valuable, and to these people we reply—go out and buy one from a collector. The last thing in my mind when I started TRUE WEST eleven years ago was that it would become a collector's item! The first indication we got of it was when the first three issues were unavailable and people started paying more money for them. As we gained more readers, demand for the unavailable copies became stronger and the price finally got far beyond the range of readers who would merely like to read those copies and not invest in them as a collector's item.

Finally, it got so strong that we had to do something one way or the other about it. Well, I haven't found anything yet that is *all good.* There are a few readers who have a complete collection of TRUE WEST. About half of those we have heard from (not over a dozen out of a tremendous mail) are not happy with our reprinting the old stories. The others say go ahead and reprint them because the book and new features alone are worth the price and, in addition,

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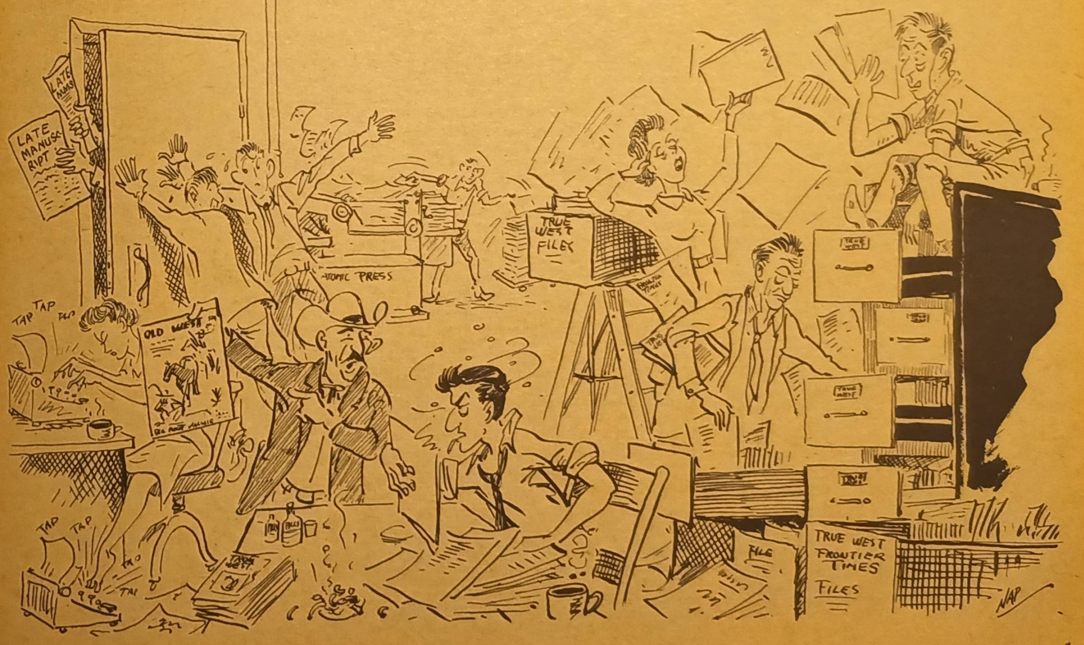


The OTHER WORLD of the Superstitions

This land is not accursed. It is willing to let men enter its mountains and canyons and leave again—unharmed. Why is it that so few of them do?

By BERNICE McGEE

Photographs by Don Barnett

Our first view of one of the last remaining wilderness areas.

LOCATED somewhere in the rugged Superstition Mountains in Arizona is the famous Dutchman's Lost Mine. Its legend has brought a line of gold seekers to the foreboding wilderness ever since the Dutchman, Jacob Walzer, first discovered his secret source of wealth in 1875. The gold is still there luring its victims year by year to enter this desolate region with their hopes of finding fame and fortune.

For a century the Superstitions have been laid with a carpet of blood, starting with the Chiricahua Apache massacre of 400 Mexican miners in 1848 to the latest fatality, Vance Bacon, a mining engineer who fell to his death from the high pinnacle of Weaver's Needle, on March 26, 1963, just a few weeks before we were to try our hand at entering the beautiful but deadly area. Each of the seven of us had minor injuries during our two weeks in this vast expanse of rugged terrain, but perhaps the Thunder Gods were more gentle with us since the wealth we sought was not in gold.

When most six-year-old children were asking to hear "Jack and the Beanstalk," I was begging my father to repeat, among other stories, the tale of "Jake and His Gold Mine." Thus he entertained me with such accounts, reliving his youth on the desert around Phoenix, Florence and Cave Creek. He answered all my questions as best he could about the old Dutchman and the Indians' superstitions about the Big Mountain. He described also how he hunted quail and rabbit on the slopes of Superstition, hiked its twisting canyons, and explored caves in search of Indian ruins.

His two old prospector-friends, Jake Lemon and "Saltback" Morris, who befriended him as a boy, became my make-believe friends. Most important of all my father gave me respect and love for the Arizona Indians and from this love came a desire to learn more. He also taught me the beauty as well as the danger of the desert.

As I grew older, I studied books on the area, sent for topography maps and memorized the terrain, anything to make me feel a part of my beloved mountain. Then there came a day when there were no more books to help me learn and no people who could give answers to my many questions. There was but one thing left for me and that was to make the trip to see for myself. I was thirty years old before I was given the chance to see my dream come true, twenty-four years of waiting to walk in my father's footsteps and to discover with my own eyes what I had up to now seen only through his. My husband understood my desire and took me to the Superstitions in 1958 and again in 1961. These two trips formed the groundwork for the 1963 expedition.

IN 1961 Jack and I returned from the mountains with stories of the amazing things we had seen and the tales we had heard. Our friends, Don and Darlene Barnett, were as interested as we and the four of us spent much of our spare time during the next two years in talking about this neglected phase of Arizona history.

Don Barnett is a commercial photographer in Fort Worth, and he was anxious to record our findings on film. We then asked Eberhard Jackh and Karl Swoboda, two German students in this country on a training program, to go with us. They were extremely enthusiastic as they had heard legends of the Superstition Mountains in Germany and, most important, they welcomed the opportunity to see the country before their return home. One of the boys was eager to study the insect life of the Arizona desert, as his father is an entomologist for the Uebersee Museum in Bremen.

Our plan for the expedition was to cover as much of the region termed the "Superstition Mountains" as possible. Although there is only one Superstition Mountain, the lesser known surrounding peaks, such as Black Top Mountain, Bluff Springs Mountain, Weaver's Needle, Battleship Mountain, Geronimo Head Mountain, Tortilla Mountain, La Barge Mountain, Iron Mountain, White Mountain, Castle Dome Mountain, Mound Mountain, Spencer Mountain and others all fall into the category of the Superstitions. Our goal was to explore west of Superior to Apache Junction and south of the Apache Trail to the highway at Florence Junction, an almost impossible task in the space of time we had. It would mean working around the clock to obtain the data and photographs we hoped to bring back.

Our home suddenly turned into a gymnasium with everyone working out three nights a week, two hours a night. The other evenings it was a conference room, a school where we held classes on geography, topography and history. We acquainted ourselves with the wildlife and flora of the area, studied maps, compass reading, how to properly use, handle and care for firearms. We used our garage to learn basic mechanics, to repair any damage that might occur to our trail machines on which we would have to depend so much.

Don briefed us on camera order. We were given a talk by Dr. Earl Schraff on emergency treatment, first aid, and the new freezing method of treating snakebite and scorpion sting. We knew that at times it would be out of the question to get to a doctor within twelve to fourteen hours. For eight weeks we trained on a tough obstacle course perfecting our skill in riding the trail machines. We were relying on them to take us deeper into the mountains' interior than ever before possible.

Our original group of six worked as a unit for four months. At the end of this time each of us was aware of the danger involved. We knew that, even though we would be operating as a group, each person would have to rely on his own initiative, determination, physical strength and personal courage to be able to keep up with the rigorous schedule. The geography and topography of the land was stressed so that, should it become necessary, any one of us could make his own way out of the mountains.

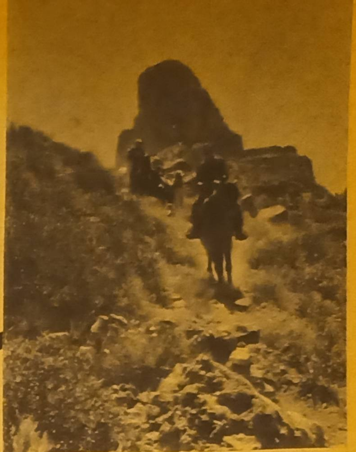
DURING our training program we contacted people in Arizona whose help we needed. We contacted the Archaeology Department of the University of Arizona. They were very gracious in their offer of help. Not having conducted an intensive survey of this region, they were most interested in the interior. We contacted Texas Christian University's History Department in our own city of Fort Worth. Dr. Curtis Nunn was most cooperative.

When our intentions became known, we received help from many sources. Two new buses were lent us by a local foreign car company to carry our heavy equipment. We were given six new trail machines to use where there were no trails. We were donated heavy trail clothing and food for the entire trip. Miss Narda Volinsky, a dietician, planned a 4,000-calorie diet to cover our expected output of energy.

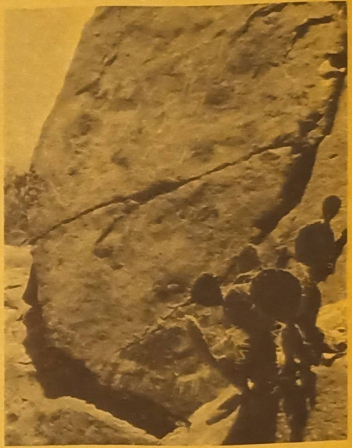
Then a seventh person was added to our expedition. A reporter for the Fort Worth *Star Telegram* was accepted by our unit after two conferences. The paper planned to cover our expedition with a day-by-day article. We did not know if Ed Johnson, the reporter, would be physically able to endure the hardships. It was only a week and a half until departure.

We were later to find that we had a man going with us whom we would ad-

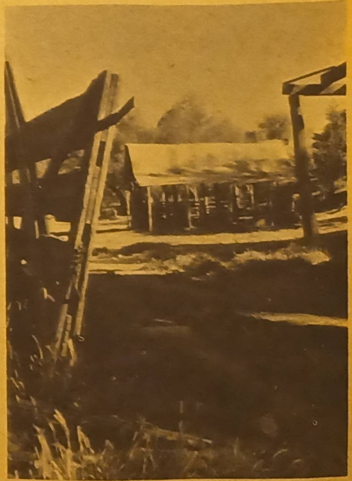
This old grindstone was put aboard a sailing vessel at Swansea, Wales, eighty-five years ago to come around Cape Horn to find its new home.



Weaver's Needle—the compass of the Superstitions.



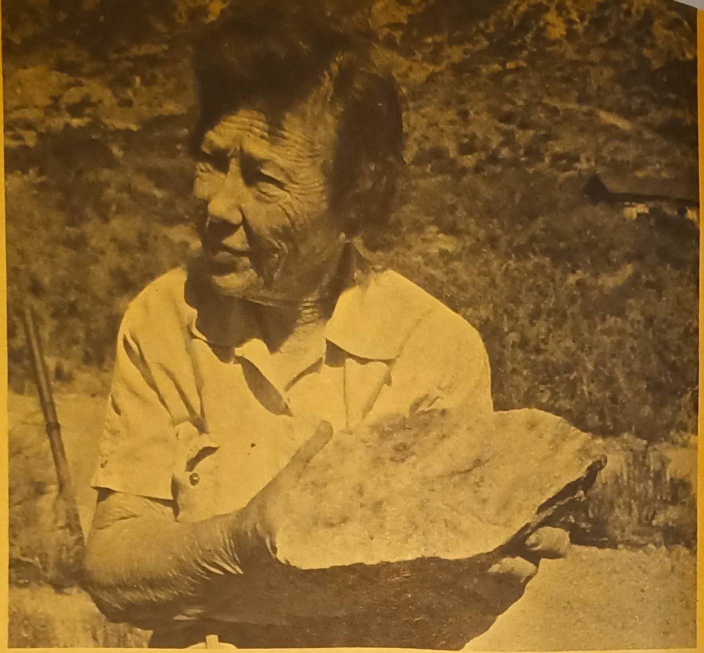
Petroglyphs



The original Reavis house and orchards are where the barn now stands.

mire more and more. There were days when we went through hell together and he never complained. He did an excellent job of reporting in spite of the difficulty of finding a telephone to call in his story each night. Don sent in a roll of film per day to use with the newspaper articles.

Donations came forth—a transistor tape recorder that we needed desperately, ammunition, medical supplies, and guns of all descriptions. Trail equipment, such as compasses, knives and even a pair of boots, was showered on our reporter. Other calls came from people who had read articles in the library that perhaps we had missed. The entire adventure was fantastic in scope by the time we departed.



Mrs. Middleton graciously set aside her firm rule of not allowing photographs to be taken of her or of Silver King.

ON FRIDAY, May 3, 1963, the seven of us felt a mixture of emotions as the time finally arrived to begin the big adventure. My husband and I shared last minute doubts about taking our five friends into the area. It was possible they could be seriously injured or even killed.

Don Barnett and his wife were busy packing camera equipment. Everyone's face showed signs of strain from the past four months of hard work. Ed Johnson looked completely awed by it all as he stood armed with his portable typewriter. Eberhard made sure all his insect collecting equipment was put in a safe, soft place in the back of a bus. Karl was rechecking the cords that secured the trail machines. TV cameras were pointed at our every move. Newspaper photographers' flash bulbs punctuated our friends' and relatives' good wishes. It wasn't until we reached the outskirts of town that we realized we were actually heading west toward an experience that would create a bond between us that time could never destroy.

We drove straight through from Fort Worth to King's Ranch, Arizona, our base camp for the next few weeks. It is ideally situated on the southern slope of Superstition Mountain. We had driven twenty-eight hours and were exhausted when we arrived late the following night. Sunday we spent the day sorting groceries, unloading and setting up our equipment so we could be ready to start out early Monday morning.

The Silver King's only remaining ore bucket, still suspended from its gallows frame, is in perfect condition.

It took half a day to separate groceries into four separate cabins. We would all prepare our own breakfasts to save time; each person was to pack his own lunch to carry on the trail. The evening meals were to be prepared together. It was then we would discuss the day's events, our different impressions and compare notes on our operations. Monday was to be the break-in hike for the group. We would hike from King's Ranch north to Superstition Mountain, where high in a canyon were the ancient Indian petroglyphs we had come to photograph and study.

Monday morning dawned clear and hot. We left the ranch and struck out across the desert floor. Jack and I took turns setting the pace. After we had hiked about an hour we took time out to inspect a strange formation of saguaro cactus. This plant grows at random over this area of the desert, all shapes and sizes, with no two alike. We found four giant saguaros close together in a perfect 15° north-northeasterly direction. We estimated their age to be about 250 years. One would assume they had to be hand planted to be in such a perfect line.

When sighting along the saguaros, our eyes were led to the highest peak of Superstition Mountain. Were they trail markers left by the Peralta miners to point out the Spanish trail? We were to find more trail markers later in the day. We left the saguaros and continued in a northerly direction till we came to a wide and rocky ravine. After crossing to the eastern side we followed this ravine upward into the mountains until it widened and deepened and became the canyon we were looking for. We continued until the canyon took a sudden 45° right turn to the east-northeast.

In crossing over a seventeen-foot boulder of red lava rock we discovered it was pitted with seven cone-shaped holes. They ranged from six inches to ten inches in diameter and were ten inches to twelve inches deep. We had seen these man-made holes before and recognized them to be mortar holes where ore was crushed by hand. As we rounded the canyon curve, we knew we had arrived at our destination. Between us and the opposite side of the canyon lay two brackish waterholes. On the opposite canyon wall from where we were standing was a peculiar jumbled mass of black cubic lined rocks. Even from where we stood we could make out the petroglyphs covering an area seventy-five feet long and twenty feet high. It had taken two and a half hours of fast pace hiking to reach this spot. The seven of us made our way across a narrow rock corridor that separates the two waterholes, then we scattered to the winds, examining and searching farther up the canyon for the many Indian petroglyphs.

The Spanish markings were set apart from the Indian signs. One lay in the middle of the canyon on a small rock jutting out of the canyon floor. It was as if put there so it could not possibly be missed, for you have to pass this rock from any approach to the water. The first Spanish symbol we saw was a circle with lines shooting in all directions from the center ring, resembling the sun and its rays. A little below this was the word "oro" etched deep in the rock. Oro, is the Spanish word for gold. About twenty-five feet from this we found another similar sign except this sunburst had one of the lines around the circle extended farther than all the others. This arm pointed toward the higher elevations of the canyon. At the end of the extended arm was a solid white oval mark. This sunburst had a dot in the center of the sun circle. It was evidently a trail marker.

We could have spent the entire two weeks in this one canyon searching the vast area for other symbols. Of the many petroglyphs we examined, several we are quite excited about. Photographs of these symbols have since been placed in the hands of men who have knowledge to verify our beliefs, perhaps. We have tried to connect them with the Apache, Pima, Papago, Salado or Maricopa Indians, but we now have reason to believe that some of these symbols date back to a civilization now extinct. In the excitement of our findings we made the trip back down the mountain in one hour and fifteen minutes. We had been working in a breezeless 115° heat and our canteens were reduced to a mere swallow of water of near the same temperature.

MY HUSBAND and I first met Mrs. Grace Middleton three years ago on our second visit to Arizona. We had read articles about Mrs. Middleton and her town of Silver King, but I can hardly believe the authors ever really visited this place. Some of the derogatory remarks made about Mrs. Middleton had kept us from even trying to visit her remote home on previous trips. These articles led us to believe she lived in an armed fortress, dedicated to shooting any and all trespassers intruding upon her property.

I wish at this point to dispel these stories, my wish not being one of a contradictory nature, because I do not know all of the circumstances. Yet I do feel that many people have taken undue advantage of this lady, trying to encroach on her property by looting and claim jumping. Vandals keep her on constant alert. People have exploited her friendship for personal gain. They think it brave to raid her domain by throwing rocks at the walls of the guest house and breaking the crystal clear panes of glass that were brought in from great distances by mule train during its construction. Is it any wonder that strangers are at times met with distrust and, perhaps, the sharp whine of a high powered rifle bullet? I am sure any woman living alone in a remote area would shoot to protect herself and her property.

That day our group was to spend searching out trails, poking into abandoned holes and viewing with awe the remains of the famous town of Silver King, as guests of Mrs. Middleton, the owner and lone resident of this once bustling mining town. The "Queen of the Silver King" reigns over her desert empire with undisputed power and a stern but loving hand.

I am not a tall person, but I had to look down into the bird-bright eyes that reflected so much quick humor, kindness and wisdom. This "Ogre of the Mountains" has endeared herself in our hearts. One would have to search a long while to find a more friendly, lovable person. Her knowledge of the region, its facts and fantasies, are amazing.

Mrs. Middleton has prospected and mined all over the area and has claims as far away as her Fortuna Mine two and a half miles from the Silver King. She can blast with dynamite or operate a bulldozer with equal ease. Her sharp mind is as accurate as a calculator and she gives ready answers to any question asked about the eighty-eight-year-old history of the town and the mining done there. Mrs. Middleton's versatility was evident even in her younger years. She worked for a Hollywood cosmetic company and wrote a beauty column for a Florida newspaper. During this period of her life, Mrs. Middleton owned a school specializing in teaching psychology. Her warmth, charm, intelligence and courage captured the affections of our entire group.

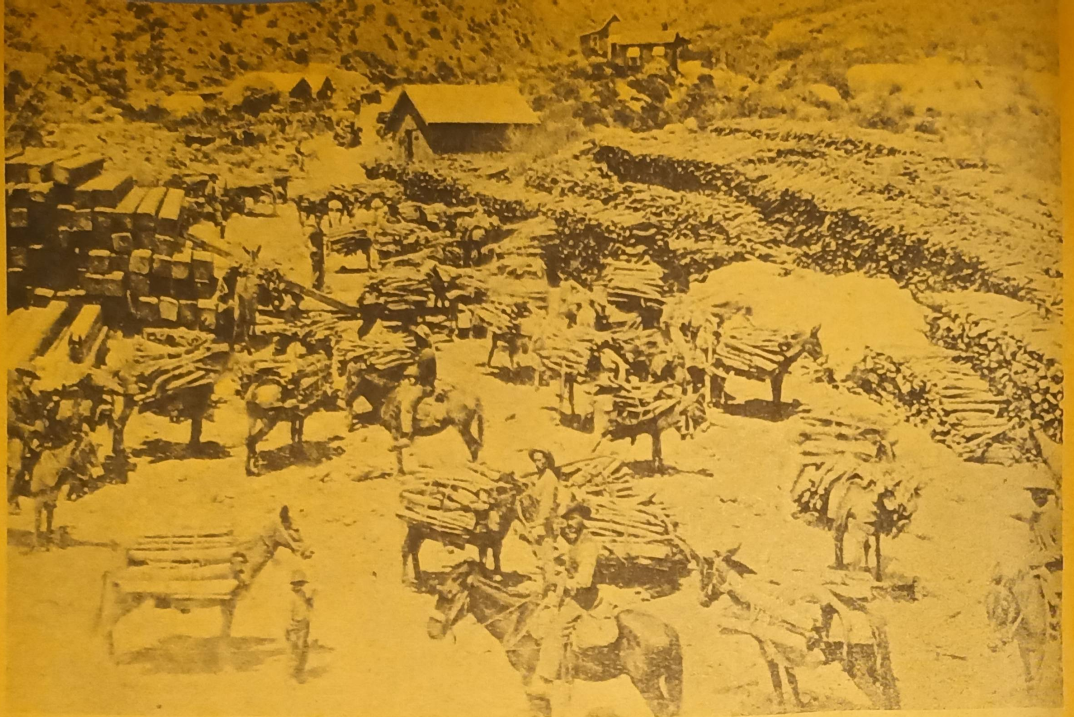
Her home is, in itself, a monument to the town of Silver King. It is built entirely with the remnants of the original buildings. Her small house sits on a hill apart from the old town. From the porch its queen can keep a sharp eye on her beloved city.

In its heyday there were about 4,000 inhabitants. From 1875 to 1900 the Silver King gave up an estimated $42,000,000 worth of ore. The entrance now is crumbled and the lower levels flooded. Time and the elements have taken their toll in sixty-three years of standing idle. In 1900 the price of silver dropped to twenty-five cents an ounce and the mine closed. It was impossible to bring the ore to the surface, haul it, smelt it and show a profit.

The Cornish miners and their families drifted away to newer finds and more prosperous areas, and the town was slowly taken back to the desert. Wind, sun, rains and shifting earth have erased the feeble work of man until today the only thing remaining is the once lovely and regal two-storied guest house, now as scarred and weatherbeaten as the rocks and hills that surround it. Originally it was built to serve the V. I. P.s who came to the Silver King. It also held the paymaster's office and no one can guess how many "big deals" were worked out in its lavish confines.

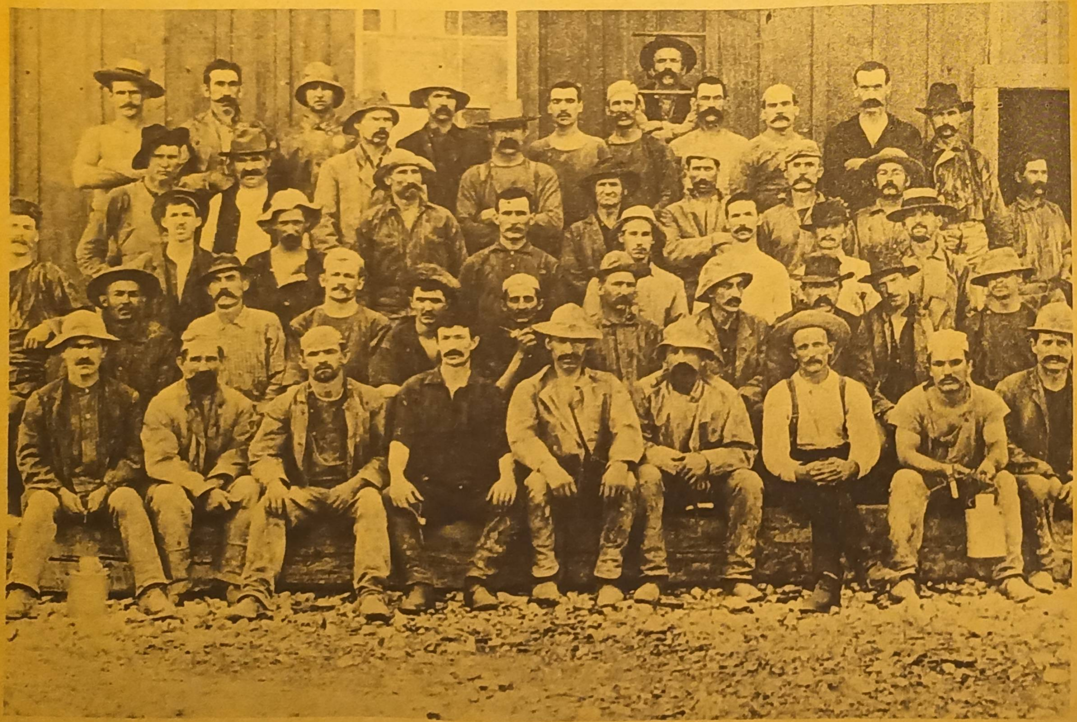
This one-time "mansion" has the distinction of being the first house in Arizona to have electricity and bathrooms outfitted with porcelain bathtubs and indoor flush commodes. The large mirror over the fireplace in the parlor must have captured many reflections of gaily dressed ladies and their handsome, bearded, gun-toting escorts. A huge dining room was separated from the living room by heavy wooden sliding doors, handmade

Apache Lake as seen from high on the Reavis Road.



The cords of timber used in the mining operation stripped the Silver King locale of wood for a radius of five miles.

The tintype poses of the whiskered Cornish miners were taken during the boomtown days in the 1870s.



and fitted so perfectly that their opening and closing did not disturb the dinner guests. The kitchen and two bedrooms completed the downstairs area.

A beautiful cherry wood bannister, hand-turned in England, still stands sturdy and gleaming, embellishing the stairway that leads to three upstairs bedrooms.

Around the clock, armed guards were stationed on the roof where a lookout kept vigil against Geronimo's Chiricahuas or anyone interested in high grading a little ore after dark. From the lookout you can see the three-room rock jail. The only prisoners it now holds are the palo verde trees that have grown within its crumbled walls.

THE CORRAL that once held the many twenty-mule teams has withstood the years in grand shape. The head-high circular wall was built by fitting large stones together without the use of mortar. Miners would often smuggle out silver ore and, under the darkness of night, climb over the high wall into the corral, burying their cache in the dirt floor. The trampling of hundreds of shod feet tamped the earth solid again leaving no evidence of fresh digging. How the miners reclaimed their buried treasure is a mystery to us after seeing the large area within the old corral.

Karl walked to the pumphouse and photographed the only remaining ore bucket, still suspended from its gallows frame in perfect condition. The pumphouse stands alone at the near end of Main Street against the backdrop of King Crown Peak. A white lime dike runs in horizontal slashes across the face of the peak.

Most mines of great wealth are found in close proximity to the lime dike which runs from Buenos Aires across South America, Mexico and North America to disappear into the frozen wastes of Alaska.

The pumphouse is near the "Glory Hole," an insignificant looking pit that we were told gave up over $14,000,000 in silver ore. Mrs. Middleton had dynamited earlier that morning next to the Glory Hole, so we all began digging and picking at the white layers of silica rock that were so recently exposed. She climbed up on the fresh pile of rubble and started carefully picking at the loose rock. Suddenly she called to Jack and me.

With her famous grin she asked, "Which of you two is my best friend?" and handed me an unbelievable work of nature's art. The top of the foot-long silica boulder was encrusted with hundreds of clear crystal formations resembling a miniature city. They sparkled and glittered in the bright sunlight. In the center of the crystals lay a beautiful lavender amethyst. The rest of the piece was streaked with blue from bromide, and greens from chloride. Black specks of native silver completed the color.

To Ed, Karl and Eberhard she gave Apache tears the size of a medium potato. I have never seen Apache tears to equal these in size. To Don and Darlene she gave a boulder of quartz, lined and streaked with silver. Perfect crystals as large as a man's thumb protruded from the top and sides of the round lump of quartz.

We wandered to the blacksmith shop and saw the grindstone that was brought to Silver King in the 1870s. This old grindstone has worked without complaint ever since being put aboard a sailing vessel at Swansea, Wales, eighty-five years ago to come around Cape Horn to find its new home. The people of Superior still use it at times to sharpen knives, axes and garden tools.

At the mouth of Silver King shaft is a platform that was used by the miners to shower and change clothes after coming up out of the mine. Silver King shaft #2 is only a few yards away, looking much like its sister shaft. Mrs. Middleton briefed us on the shaft that lay behind the crumbled entrance. She said, "King's shaft is 960 feet deep."

The silver was mined at ten different levels with the levels seventy-five to ninety feet apart. Due to the shortage of wood, the lower levels are braced with columns of silver. Mrs. Middleton claims that if she had enough money to reopen the King she could bring out enough silver to make millions. It would cost considerably to start operations. The lower levels would have to be pumped dry at a very slow pace to let them dry out gradually.

Due to the scarcity of water in Arizona, one of the mining companies in a nearby town wanted to pay Mrs. Middleton to let them pump out the water to be used in their own mining operations. She declined the offer knowing that if the water were pumped out too rapidly it would cause the lower levels to collapse. The vein of silver would be lost forever under millions of tons of mud and rock.

Mrs. Middleton knows from twenty-three years of talking with the men who had worked the Silver King exactly where the vein of silver was when operations ceased in 1900. She has seen the old mining engineers' maps of the ten-level plan and has checked the mining records. They have convinced her that the silver lode had not been scratched in comparison to the silver that is still there. She kidded us saying, "All I need is one of your Texas millionaires to back me, and I could bring up a million dollars in less than a year!"

After the tour of the town Mrs. Middleton invited us to look at her prized collection of old photographs. These pictures were taken during the boom days. The tin-type poses of the whiskered Cornishmen at their work are priceless. When she showed us one photograph of the miners all sitting in a group, she pointed to one of the men in the front row whose head was swathed in bandages. She said a lady from Globe had visited her a few weeks before and had recognized this bandaged dandy. Her uncle had been the one responsible for the cracking of this gentleman's head during a scuffle at one of the local saloons.

Mrs. Middleton pointed to a pass, high in King's Crown Peak, that marked the beginning of the long trail to Globe. This trail was eagerly used by the miners after a hard week's work in the mine. They would walk the twenty miles to Globe, spend their pay getting gloriously drunk, and walk back in time to report for work Monday morning. And to quote Mrs. Middleton—"without ever rolling down the mountain."

ONE OF THE most touching stories she told was about a child's grave on a nearby slope. This child was a miner's son who had been bitten by a rattler and died. The nine-year-old boy was buried in the upper hills away from the noise of the mines. At that time the higher country was thickly overgrown with wild iris and trees. The child's family put a small iron fence around the little grave and planted it full of the beautiful wild iris.

Mrs. Middleton said just a few months prior to our visit, two men came to Silver King to buy old iron. She told them they were welcome to look around and see if they could find any. In the afternoon they returned from their search asking if she knew about a grave that lay on the slopes of the hill. It had been encircled by an iron fence that had long since fallen over. The two men had reset the fence around the small grave. Mrs. Middleton had heard of the child's grave but had never seen it. The men told her she could easily find it because of the profusion of colored iris.

She could not believe it because for over fifty years, due to the steadily increasing colder changes of temperature, iris had not grown even at the lower levels. She walked up the next day and found the grave as it had been described. The rusted iron fence was holding in a mass of the beautiful blooms that had been extinct for over fifty years. The flowers the child's parents planted had

The "Glory Hole," an insignificant looking hole in the ground, gave up over $14.000.000 in silver ore.

survived the coldest heights and outlived the hardiest trees to remain the only marker to the memory of a little boy.

We hated the thought of leaving her at the end of the day and said our good-byes with the promise to return soon. We left our "Queen of the Silver King" standing watch over her empire of silver.

The shadows were lengthening fast as our bus traveled along the dirt path cut out of the desert by the hoofs of tugging mules and the heavy, wide-wheeled ore wagons of years long past. One could almost hear the zing of the mule skinners' whips. During the twenty-five years of mining operations, the trail from mine to smelter was worn deeper and deeper until today you ride through cuts some of which are eight to ten feet deep. A luxurious feeling to ride on a road cut and graded by $42,000,000 worth of silver ore!

THE DUTCHMAN, Jacob Von Walzer, when making his historic trips into the mountains, would cross the desert until he came to Queen Creek. Queen Creek runs from east to west following the southern edge of the Superstition Range. Whether he left from Phoenix or Florence he would use this wide, sandy avenue until he came to Charley Whitlow's Ranch, situated on the south bank of Queen Creek. This was an abandoned Spanish ranch until Whitlow took it over in 1875. It then became a stage station to Pinal City and the Silver King.

Walzer discovered his mine in the middle 1870s so it is known that he and his partner, Jacob Wisner, stopped here as a resting place before turning north to enter the mountains. The easiest route into the mountains was to pass an old Spanish ranch and go though a canyon behind Whitlow's ranch. This canyon is now named Whitlow Canyon.

Walzer and Wisner followed the canyon northward to its end. Here they were said to have spent the night at Lady Kavanaugh's Goat Ranch on Milk Ranch Creek. Kavanaugh Mines were located on Mineral Creek as it flows into the Gila River. At the north end of Whitlow Canyon is Coffee Flat Mountain. It is just west and north of the fork where Red Tank, Randolph and Frazer Canyons all converge to form Frazer Canyon. Most of the present-day names of the canyons and mountains were never known to the two Dutchmen. It was, for the most part, an unnamed, unknown wilderness.

At the junction of Randolph and Frazer Canyons there was a small rock house left by the Spaniards of the Peralta mining era where the two men camped at nightfall. This is where the trail was lost by followers trying to track them to their golden bonanza, reputed to be worth $90,000,000. They could have disappeared into any of the three canyons from this point. Their trail was never known from there.

By continuing north up Red Tank Canyon they could have dropped into lower La Barge Canyon. This canyon continues in a northwesterly direction, winding past Coffee Flat Mountain, Tortilla Mountain, Bluff Springs Mountain, Three Red Hills and Geronimo Head Mountain to finally empty into the Salt River to the north. Randolph and Frazer Canyons would have taken them to Iron Mountain and White Mountain farther to the east.

After Wisner was killed by the Apaches at their mine, Walzer's trips into the mountains became few and far between. It became more dangerous for him to go alone. Not only did he have the Apaches to contend with, but the men who tracked him continually. Many times he was followed, many times shot at, but he always knew how to elude his pursuers and would let them wander in the mountains, obsessed with finding the man who was no longer there.

On the dirt floor of the ranch house kitchen is a hand-built rock stove.

Fred Moxley from Phoenix and Don Weagle from Fort Worth joined us with trail machines of their own for the next day's journey. We left King's Ranch and rode east to Queen Creek. We followed the creek bed through a haze of extremely fine, blowing sand. After several hours of tough going, someone saw in the distance an abandoned ranchhouse on the north bank of the creek. The house caused a lot of excitement within the group. We knew it was not the Witlow Stage Station as that had been destroyed during construction of Whitlow Dam, its foundation buried under several feet of earth.

This picturesque rock house was built in such a way to indicate it dates back to the 1800s. One room had a stone slab floor, one was dirt, and a more modern wing had a wooden floor. On the dirt floor of the kitchen was a hand-built rock stove in comparatively good shape. The barns and corrals looked like someone had taken special care of them as they were in good shape by any standards. The ranchhouse so intrigued us, we decided to photograph it inside and out. Could this be the old Spanish ranch where the Dutchman stayed? We believe it is.

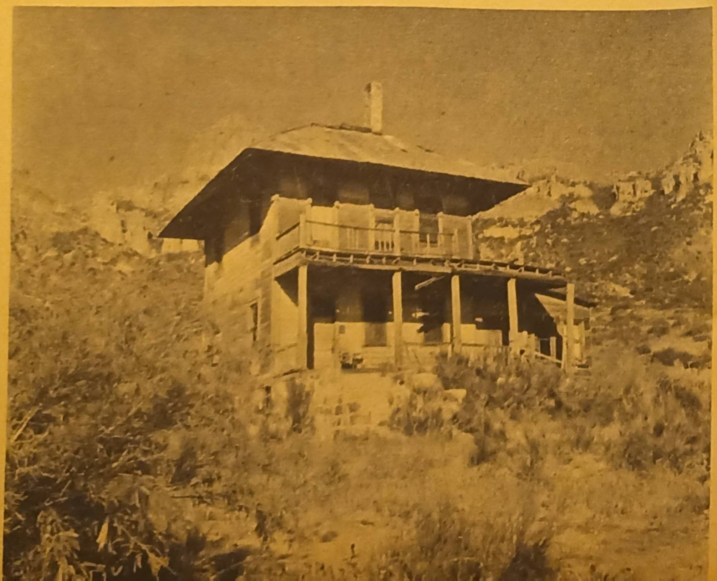
After lunch, we began wandering over the grounds. While in front of the barn my husband called asking me to see what he had found. There in the dust at his feet were three Apache tears. They were unpolished, with white rock still clinging to them. We immediately got on our hands and knees and began sifting the dirt between our fingers. In less than an hour in this one small area the nine of us had found forty-one Apache tears taken from ground we knew should not contain them. We assume someone dropped them there, but when, why, and how long ago, we will probably never know.

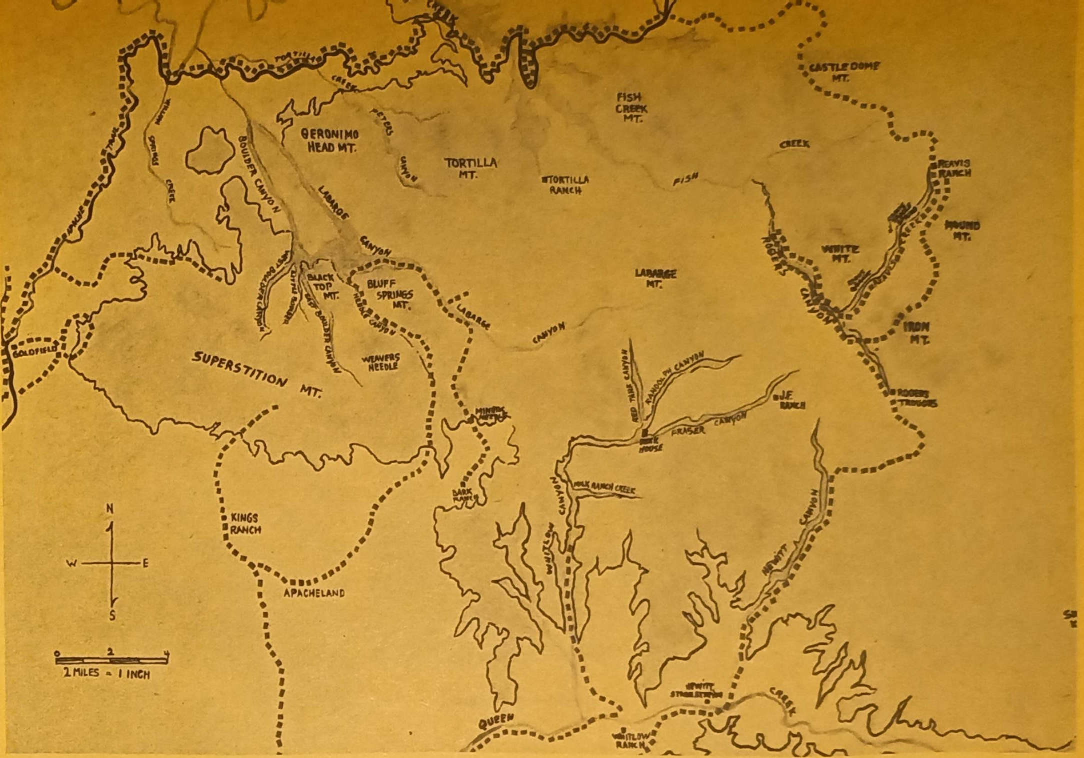
STILL tracing the Dutchman's route on to Whitlow Canyon we crossed Queen Creek. At the end of a ravine we came upon a mine shaft that had filled with water. Ore grinding holes, like those found in Hieroglyphic Canyon, were ground deep in the canyon floor at the mouth of the mine. We immediately tried to get our bearings, took compass readings and sighted landmarks. Much to our amazement this mine matched the riddles the Dutchman used to tell about his mine.

He said, "You can climb up a short distance and see Weaver's Needle." We could!

"The afternoon sun shines in my mine." It did!

Around the clock, armed guards were stationed on the roof where a lookout kept an alert vigil against Geronimo's Chiricahuas or anyone interested in "high grading" a little ore after dark.





Topography map—the dotted lines represent exploration routes.

He said, "You can see the military trail from the mine, but you cannot see the mine from the trail." And it was so!

Had we found the Dutchman's Lost Mine, or was this another false lead that so many had followed before us? Walzer also said, "My gold is in a cache across from my mine."

We spread out and began searching the sides of the ravine for any tell-tale signs of a sealed cache. In about twenty minutes, below a rock ledge and behind a palo verde tree, Karl and I found a place that looked as though the rock had been carefully placed. We called the group together and it was decided without much wasted time to begin digging!

Our only digging tool was a not too substantial collapsible shovel. When the first layer of rock was cleared away, we began to see signs of a cave behind them. The digging became more intense! If this was it, there were seventy-five years of silt, vegetation and rocks to get through. We wore out our shovel digging a hole back under the rock about six feet deep. When the shovel broke, it was useless. We tried digging with our hands but Mother Nature was protecting her own with vigor. As it was getting dark, we decided to return to the ranch and come back to this spot with the proper tools at the first opportunity. We had a tight schedule and we knew we would have to let something else go if we were to continue digging in what we believe to be the Dutchman's cache.

The sad part of this story is that we could not return. There was so much more for us to see and photograph that we were unable to work in the needed time for digging. This spot seemingly has lain undisturbed for seventy-odd years so we hope it will remain so for another year or two until we can return and spend all our time excavating this one location. Our entire group gets gold fever every time someone mentions the day we followed the Dutchman's route.

We were up hours before dawn, anxious to start our long awaited visit to the Reavis Ranch. The name, Reavis, aroused our curiosity. It was quite prominent on the first United States Geological Survey maps as far back as 1900—Reavis Trail, Reavis Springs and Reavis Grave. We knew the name was quite uncommon and we wanted to see if it had any connection with James Addison Reavis, "The Baron of Arizona" who, in the 1880s, successfully swindled the United States Government out of 11,000,000 acres of land, taking in part of Arizona, including the Superstitions, and part of New Mexico. The Baron held the Peralta Land Grant for almost ten years. This curiosity led us to our most unusual findings, as well as being the most dangerous trip we undertook.

THE HISTORY of the Reavis Ranch is filled with mystery, murder and controversy. From 1875 to 1896, E. M. Reavis, the original founder, lived here. After his murder, Harry and Pearl Knight homesteaded approximately sixty-five acres of the Reavis claim. Harry Knight was foreman for Jack Frazer's J. F. Ranch at the time. Jack Frazer became the next owner of the Reavis after reputedly paying Knight $3,000 for the claim.

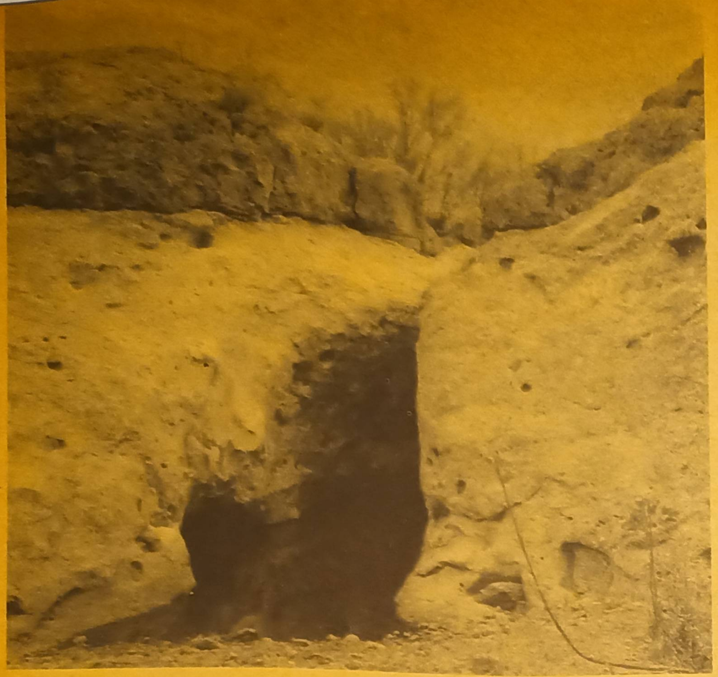
Around 1880, Jack Frazer, a saloon owner, won twenty-nine cows on an election bet. He hired a cowpuncher and turned him and the cows loose. Frazer's herd grew to such proportions that in 1909, while selling to the Clemons Cattle Company in Florence, Arizona, he guaranteed 5,000 mother cows. The J. F. brand was registered to the J. F. Land and Cattle Company with the Arizona Livestock Board in 1912.

The Clemons Cattle Company eventually sold the property to John (Hoolie) Bacon and A. C. Upton. By then, the boundaries had shrunk to their present size. Then Hoolie Bacon bought out Upton, split the allotments, and sold the Western Tortilla and south J. F. allotments to Bill Martin. The present Reavis owners bought the Tortilla from Bill Martin and the Reavis allotment from Hoolie Bacon.

Forty-five acres of the 125 sections have been sold to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Carpenter. The forty-five acres takes in the present ranchhouse and orchards. We are grateful to the owners of the gigantic Reavis and Tortilla spread for the information given us about the ranch's history, and the privilege to roam over their property at will.

It took us two and one-half hours to drive from King's Ranch to the gate that holds back the outside world of things to which we were accustomed. We unlocked the gate with a key that was entrusted to our care. Our caravan rolled through and the gate was locked behind us.

Apprehension grew as we started up the thirteen-mile road that has been graded out of the sides and over the tops of the highest peaks in the mountain range. Our heavily loaded buses never failed for a moment over a road that is almost more than a person's nerves can



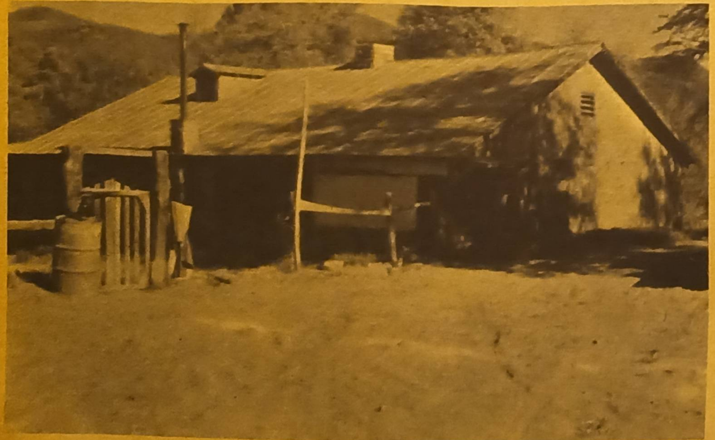
This mine now filled with water coincides with all riddles and clues left by the Dutchman.

stand.

The road is privately owned and maintained by the owners of Reavis Ranch. They fight a never-ending battle with problems of erosion, both from rains and the ruts left by wheeled vehicles in the loose, soft, sliding shale. We had to drive with our inside wheels up the mountainside as much as 30° in places to get past the crumbled-out areas that would have sent us sliding down hundreds of feet into the deep canyon. Ten miles an hour was our top speed; more often it was a snail's pace as we climbed higher and higher.

Crossing over Castle Dome Mountain was an experience never to be forgotten. All of us got out of the buses, leaving our two most experienced mountain drivers to inch their heavy load over this dangerous grade. The incline is extremely steep for a distance of fifty feet. The wheels slid perilously close to the edge of the sheer drop-off for the road is just wide enough for the wheels. Don's and Jack's courage was really tested. The rest of us had a hard time walking up the grade, slipping in the foot and a-half of soft crumbled rock.

At last, one at a time, the buses came roaring over the top of the peak where the rest of us stood waiting with a bit of apprehension. Our relief at their safety was overshadowed by the knowledge that in order to get out, they had this peril to face again—worse, on the return, because at the bottom of the extremely sharp incline was a hairpin curve. If the load was too much for the brakes, the curve could never be made.



Back view of Reavis' ranch house.

We took a ten-minute break on the crest of the mountain to ease the tension from the two hours spent on this terrifying road. This is not just a woman's description which some might discount as highly exaggerated. The men in our group have nerves of iron, but they also were ready for the sight of the Reavis Ranch. We had begun to doubt that the road led anywhere except to higher and more nerve-wracking grades.

I will admit that I was ready to turn around and head back, but there were three things that stopped me from voicing my opinion. One, there was no place to turn around. Two, we would have to go back over what we had succeeded in conquering up to this point. Three, the fear of not satisfying my curiosity about Reavis Ranch was much more than fear of the road.

In the last half-hour of our upward climb the air grew cooler until we actually felt chilled. We thought it just seemed colder than it actually was because we had been working every day in temperatures ranging from 108° to 115°. Then at 5,000 feet, the vegetation changed considerably and the temperature continued to drop. Contrary to what we had seen in the desert, everything was green. Tall trees that still held their winter leaves were everywhere. We had the feeling Arizona was left far behind and we were entering a world strange to behold and difficult to comprehend.

SUDDENLY we came into a valley that was unbelievable. Our now level road wound us through a lush green valley that lay between two mountain peaks, more like a New England setting than one you would expect to find in the middle of the Superstition Mountains. Pastures of tall green grass were held in by log fences that followed the road. We were hardly prepared for the hundreds of apple trees that were in the groves leading up to the ranchhouse. Apples in Arizona!

The ranchhouse and surrounding landscape was breathtaking. A large rock and adobe house faced a pool of clear spring water. White ducks floated on the lake that lay in the shadows of beautiful old shade trees. Wild roses grew along the shore. The wind was blowing in cold gusts and the air was filled with falling leaves. An autumn scene in May. Below were the lower orchards of apple trees.

The ranchhouse with its thick walls was almost too cool to be comfortable. The large living room had a massive rock fireplace at one end of the room. The ceiling was crossbeamed with mighty tree trunks. The ponderous furniture, handmade in the town of Superior and hauled to the ranch over the Reavis Road, matched the massiveness of the house.

The original settler in the valley (1875) was E. M. Reavis. It is alleged he was a second cousin to James Addison Reavis. How this man came to choose the seclusion of this high mountain retreat is not known. We heard him referred to as "The Hermit of the Superstitions," but it seemed he was more of a recluse than a hermit because of his frequent trips into town.

Reavis was a Yale graduate, well educated in languages, science and mathematics. The mystery of what turned him to isolation has never been solved. Rumors proposed everything from being a bitter, disillusioned, rejected suitor to running away from life's realities. After seeing his beautiful Eden, I can understand why a man would choose to spend his life there. He was not a hermit by choice. There is only one place like this in the world and it happened to be secluded. So he went to the mountain because he could not change geography.

Reavis made his living from the sale of potatoes, cabbages, turnips and the wild things that grew, such as blackberries, raspberries, cherries, and walnuts. He used the water from his mountain springs for irrigating, turning his home into a garden paradise. As his business grew, he hired men to help him. He later raised cattle, for grass and water were abundant.

With his produce loaded on the backs of burros, he and his dogs set out to travel the long, lonely and difficult trail. It winds in a southerly direction from the ranch on White Mountain, following a wide, rocky creek that flowed with clear, running water. The creek has to be forded many times. At one point the trail crosses a meadow of pines so tall they blot out the sky. Its floor is spongy with grass and silenced by a carpet of brown pine cones. Four miles south of the ranch, the trail leads past a spring also named for Reavis.

We found we could follow this ancient trail for a distance of four and a-half miles from the ranch to the Reavis Divide on the Hondas. Parts of the old trail had been lost due to erosion and fallen trees. We rode around these obstacles and picked up his trail again within a matter of minutes. When we reached the divide, the abrupt downward path into Rogers Canyon forced us to leave our trail machines.

The trail had not been traveled in many years and nature had tried to cover it with thickets of "Wait-a-Bits," a lacy, slender shrub with thorns that bite and stay in the flesh. They tore at our clothing and equipment until backing through the thickets using our backpacks as bulldozers was the only was to stay on the trail. The decline is so rapid that the temperature starts to rise immediately. Cool, lush forest of a few moments before changed into low brush so dense we had to fight our way down the trail every inch. The trail could not be followed into Rogers Canyon that day as nearly the entire morning had been spent getting into the Reavis Ranch and unloading our equipment. However, we did want to test the trail first to see what condition it was in before the long journey into Rogers Canyon the following day. Our objective was the cliff dwellings that are known to be along the north end of Rogers Canyon and Fish Creek Canyon.

THESE cliff dwellings are very remote. No one, to our knowledge, had been able to photograph and explore them as we planned to do. Trying to carry in the heavy camera equipment was one of our main problems, plus trying to make the necessary miles in this rugged terrain. The grown-over trail was impassable.

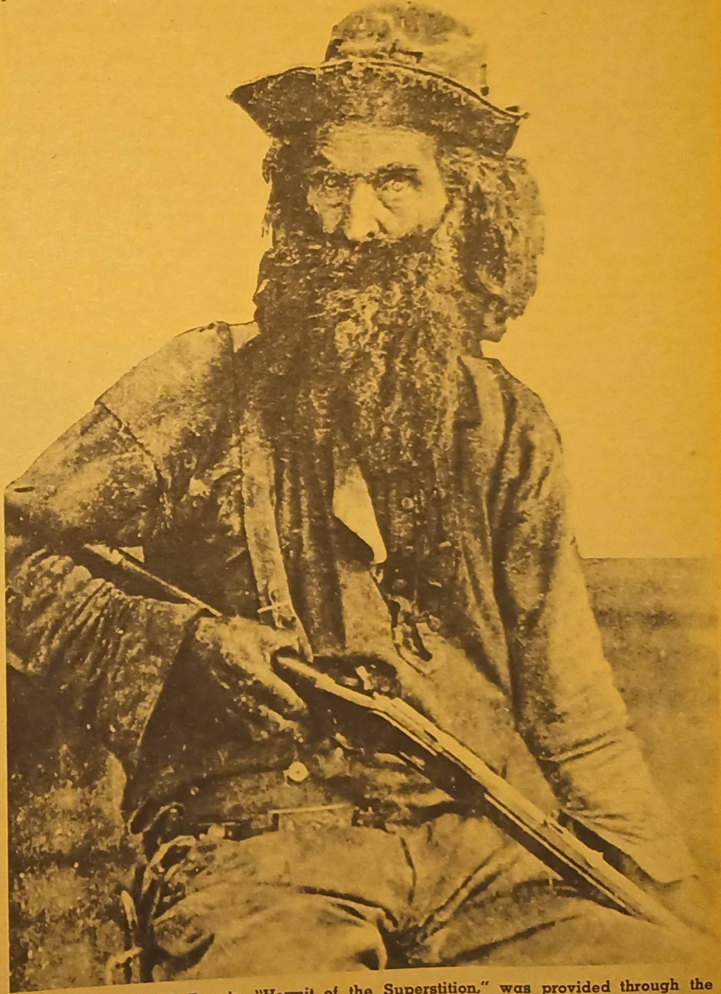
Our troubles began on the first day with our weary and painful return from the test run. Due to our complete ignorance of the area, its long, dangerous road, and its lack of any modern conveniences, Ed Johnson found himself five and a-half hours away from the nearest known telephone. We all accepted his responsibility to meet a deadline so, without waiting to eat, Eberhard, Don and Ed took the long trip out.

They started down the mountains in the dark trying to reach the Apache Trail. From the Trail it was twenty-eight miles one way to a "maybe" telephone at Roosevelt Lake, and forty miles the other way to Apache Junction where there was a known telephone. Jack and Karl stayed behind with Darlene and me as two were support enough to make the hazardous trip down the mountain with Ed. We did not expect to see them until sometime in the early morning hours but, to our surprise, at 11:45 that night we heard the sound of engines returning.

They were a frozen, hungry, but smiling group, as they had been fortunate enough to find a battery telephone at a lonely outpost of the Arizona Highway Department. After hearing their plight, a man was kind enough to cut through the red tape of this small, private communication center and put a call through to Mesa, Arizona. Mesa relayed the call to Lucille O'Conner at King's Ranch. She, in turn, called in the story for Ed to the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*. The reading public will never know the hardship involved in getting this article into the paper! All three riders had taken spills hurtling down the mountan, slipping and sliding in the loose rock and gravel. Eberhard was almost thrown over the rim of the road down a 500-foot drop!

Only four of our party made the trip the next day. Much to our disappointment, Karl and I were unable to go along as we had received minor but painful injuries on the test run. We would only have held the others back. We knew we could be of more use to the expedition by photographing the ranchhouse. orchards, and the antiquated pieces of machinery that were scattered over the valley.

Karl and I wished our four companions good hunting for they would have to make their way again down the Reavis Trail. We were a little worried as we had always worked as a unit of seven. Jack, Don, Darlene and Eberhard were the four we checked out. Machines were filled with gasoline, oil was checked, tires inspected, canteens filled and weapons loaded. Medical supplies, food, juices and,



Photograph of E. M. Reavis, "Hermit of the Superstition," was provided through the courtesy of the State Department of Library and Archives, Phoenix, Arizona.

most important, maps and compasses were put into the backpacks.

Ed Johnson stayed behind through no choice of his own. He could not risk missing his deadline again. We readied his trail machine and made sure his canteen was filled. We hated to see him leave alone on the dangerous fifty-mile trip back to King's Ranch. He took the gate key and told us he would hide it near the right-hand side of the gate under three large stones. Ed made a forlorn sight as he started on his lonely way out of the wilderness toward civilization.

We had not packed enough food to last two days and nights. Our four explorers had taken along dried breakfast flakes and juice—not exactly energy-packed for the day they experienced. They told us that morning to expect them back by 5:00 p.m. as we needed to load and be out to the Apache Trail before dark.

KARL and I worked on our diary tapes to help pass the long day. In the afternoon we did some photography when the light and shadow was best. Much of the time we hobbled around the ranch, looking at the equipment, the old mixed with the new. The most interesting item was an iron horse-drawn road grader. We could not visualize how this heavy equipment could have been used to cut a road out of the sheer side of a mountain, and what caliber man it took to sit on this monstrosity and let mules or horses pull him along that narrow road and curves. I felt much more brave about the trip down the mountain in our buses after seeing that!

This old road's history began with the Mormons. At the turn of the century they had planned a summer community in this area. It was to be named Pine Air. A plat was drawn and lots were sold. Several of the old-time residents of Mesa still talk of their purchase of Pine Air property. One still has his original papers to the land.

The present Reavis Road follows the original survey with the exception of two places. The Mormons began building the road from both ends, but the financing gave out and their claims reverted back to public domain. Part of their wagon road is still visible at the lower end of the Reavis Road. The latter was built in 1946 by Hoolie Bacon and his wife. They built the thirteen and one-half miles of road with their own money. No federal or state money has ever been spent.

The Forestry Service wants to open the Reavis gate to the public as it is in the Tonto National Forest, but the road is not ready to receive guests. It would be a disaster to let cars on it at will. After a week of grinding wheels, ruts and erosion would surely send the inexperienced flatlanders to certain tragedy.

The Forestry Service does not want to accept the responsibility of the road and its travelers, yet they want it to be an open road. The owners of the road cannot accept the responsibility for the risks involved. The daily damage to this unstable roadbed would make it impossible to maintain. Both sides have a point, as the ranch is in the Tonto National Forest, but the road speaks for itself.

Shadows were long when we first started listening for the sound of the engines in the canyon. It was 5:30 p.m. when we felt the first inkling of worry. Six o'clock, seven o'clock, eight o'clock and still the canyon was quiet and dark. Karl and I started making plans for an emergency.

We had no telephone, radio or any means of getting help from the outside. We planned to walk the seven miles of the trail with which we were familiar, using lanterns and gunfire to help locate the position of our long overdue companions. If they were lost we could help, but if one were badly hurt we would have to make further plans at that time.

We were starting down into the lower orchards to pick up the trail when we began to see small lights blinking far back in the trees, then the sound of their engines began to reach us. The headlights of their trail machines soon became large enough to make out that there were four separate beams. They were all accounted for!

We did not give them a chance to come to a full stop until we were slapping backs and hugging necks. What a sight they were—sunburned, scratched and so weary! They had spent a terrifying three hours lost in the canyons between Iron Mountain and White Mountain. We heard their story in brief intervals as we loaded our equipment into the buses. We had dreaded our descent in the daylight, but it was now dark.

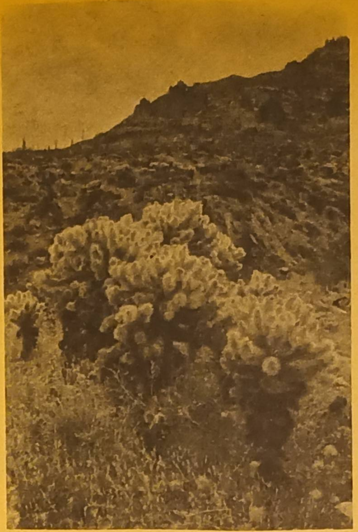
THEIR story made our anxious hours worthwhile. They followed the same trail as we had the previous day, continuing down the mountain until they dropped into Rogers Canyon. Following Rogers Canyon in a northwesterly direction, they left the Reavis Trail to travel around White Mountain. It slowed them down as there was no trail to follow, and the rocky canyon was difficult to maneuver. They had left a well-marked trail from where we had stopped the day before, to be certain of locating the correct canyon on their way back from the cliff dwellings.

The day passed quickly as they wound their way northward. By 2:30 they were still three miles away from the scheduled ruins—and they knew they had to start back or be caught in this unfamiliar mountain range after dark. The ruins are said to be a mere thirty or forty feet off the canyon floor and a short climb would make it possible to investigate them. However, they found another ruin that no one seems to know about. This cliff dwelling is located at least a hundred feet from the bottom of the canyon.

By using binoculars they could make out what seemed to be crumbled steps or handholds cut out of the rock surface leading up to a large eye-shaped cavern. The ceiling of the cave was blackened by the smoke of many fires. Inner wall structures that looked to be at least four feet tall were still standing in some places. The Salado Indians lived in the Salt River Valley region of the Superstition Range from an undetermined date before 900 A.D. to sometime in 1400 A.D. Then for some unknown reason they vanished. These Rogers Canyon dwellings are in the same general area as the Tonto National Monument cliff dwellings, so it is assumed that they are of the same culture.

Time, our worst enemy of the whole trip, prevented the climb to explore the large cave. Don took photographs of the dwelling from the canyon floor, but the distance was too great to show anything positive. If we could have all been together, we would have stayed in the canyon all night to finish the job we had started. There was water there and, by staying, we could have spent the entire afternoon getting up to this dwelling and continued on the next day to reach the larger more distant dwelling toward Fish Creek.

Deep canyons and treacherous terrain along the Reavis Road.



The Cholla cactus is beautiful but unfriendly to man, beast and machine.

Realizing that Karl and I could not know of their predicament and would worry, their concern for us was greater than their earnest wish to go on. Plans were made at that time to try again at a later date, using the Hewitt Canyon route to the south, possibly gaining the extra three hours needed.

Attempting to pick up the Reavis Trail again, their trail markers were somehow missed and they found themselves in a box canyon. A mysterious happening for our trail-wise group. Could their trail markers have been disturbed? It was already getting late and to work their way back out to Rogers Canyon would consume precious time.

THEY SAT down for a brief rest before scaling the sheer canyon wall to reach a high point for sighting landmarks. Don noticed a large bear track in the soft sand of the canyon floor—minutes old. This fresh track inspired a quicker ascent up the face of the mountain than they had anticipated. Upon reaching the top, they found (by checking a compass reading against one made earlier that morning from Reavis Divide) that they had drifted too far south in their search for the right canyon.

There was nothing to do but start climbing in a northwesterly direction from one high peak to another. Each summit looked identical and each only threw up another barrier of a higher peak. Completely encircled with a solid growth of chest-high brush, at times they could not penetrate this wall of thorns and had to crawl on their stomachs and all fours, sometimes for a distance of a quarter of a mile.

At this point they were completely unmindful of snakes or any other dangers. The fear of not getting out before dark made these risks necessary. When a place was reached where standing upright was possible, Eberhard used his powerful back and shoulders, protected by his backpack, to tear a path for the others.

Three hours of heat and tortuous work found them without water. Their mouths were seared, lips parched and cracked, from hot dry air being pulled into their lungs while laboring for breath. At last they dropped down into a peculiar grove of trees they remembered from earlier that morning. A few feet to the west was their trail—only six miles to the ranch from this point! The relief of no longer being lost gave them the energy to half-trot the remaining distance to their trail machines. It was then very dark in the heavily wooded area. They flew over the rocky creek beds, jumping the boulders and logs, and hitting the running creek at top speed when crossings were necessary. After reaching the pine meadow, their headlights searched out the trail home to a joyful reunion.

We started the grueling return trip down the steep mountain road. All eyes were glued to the pattern the car lights threw on the narrow road ahead. One glance out across the inky depths of the bottomless canyons was enough to quickly draw the eyes back to the road and keep them there. Jack and Don did a superb job of driving that night, a miracle after their exhausting day.

We half expected to find Ed Johnson somewhere along the fifty-mile route back to King's Ranch. We had told him if any trouble occurred to sit tight and wait for us to pick him up. Then we knew he had made his two-wheeled flight down the mountains safely when we found his "three rock cache." Underneath lay the little key that had opened a new world for us.

We locked the gate behind us and wondered if we would ever have the opportunity to see this lost valley again—lost in the respect that it is lost to the world. I imagine the white people who have set foot in this unknown land number less than a hundred. Because of the water, coolness, and the abundance of forests and game, this was the land the Indians chose for their home. Every mountain point is strewn with evidence of their existence. An archaeological paradise! I hope that someday a complete archaeological survey will be made in this area to preserve the priceless pieces that should be kept in Arizona museums instead of winding up on the mantles or in the attics of tourists. People of science could gradually, piece by piece, put together the life and history of America's first inhabitants. So little is now known about these extinct peoples, perhaps this single area could give us some of the answers about their culture and an explanation of their sudden flight.

"OLD MAN REAVIS," as he was often called, did not know what problems he would cause when he settled in his serene little world. Three eras of civilization are side by side in his valley just a few hundred feet from the ruins of the ninety-year-old homestead. The house that now holds the title of Reavis Ranch was built in 1937 by two cowboys who contracted to do the job for $500. The Clemons Cattle Company of Florence owned the Reavis at that time. They planted all the apple trees in the old orchard and built a house that burned down. Two women were canning fruit the day it caught fire; the men were away at the time working at Whiskey Springs, a mile southeast of the house.

Clemons also set up a sawmill at the Reavis for ranch lumber, as everything

This is the entrance to Rogers Canyon from the southern approach.

had to be packed in from the south over Reavis Divide, a distance of twenty miles from the Silver King and forty miles from Florence.

The orchards also hold apples trees of three different ages. The original ones planted by "the hermit" are where the barns now stand. A few yards from these is the saddle shop where the old man's house stood.

John Bacon and his wife planted the trees in the newest orchard. Of the 500 planted, 350 remain. Lack of care and grazing deer killed the others. From the three stages of planting, the Reavis still has perhaps 500 tree flourishing in the upper and lower orchards.

While traveling past the ruins of the hermit's old house, we wondered at this man who gave the Superstitions one of its strangest legends. A man who came from nowhere, his life a complete mystery. He lived as an eccentric, more than a hermit, from the day he built his "Garden Valley" until the day, twenty-one years later, when he was found murdered on the trail that bore his name.

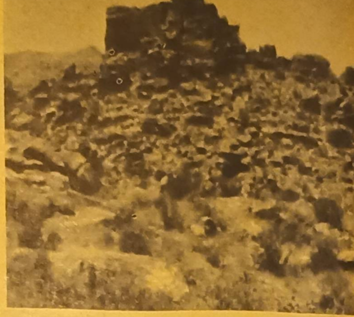
On his last trip down the Reavis Trail, he was assassinated. His burros were loaded with the produce he was taking to Silver King and Florence. He had planned to go on to Mesa for seed potatoes. Murdered after going over the Reavis Divide, his body was found between the divide and the bottom of the trail as it drops into Rogers Canyon. Bud Neighbors and James Delabaugh, prospectors, found his body on April 20, 1896. His dogs and horses remained near his decomposed body. Some say he was partly eaten by coyotes and wolves, but it was probably his own dogs tugging at his body trying to rouse the still figure. Reavis was buried near the trail by the men who found him as was the general custom of the times.

Robbery was not the motive because he always used the money from his sales to buy provisions. Rumors were that he had gold hidden on the mountain. But why wait until he had left it, if gold were the motive? There was still another inference made. Reavis had never filed on his homesite, but had squatters rights. Perhaps it was not open to entry at that time.

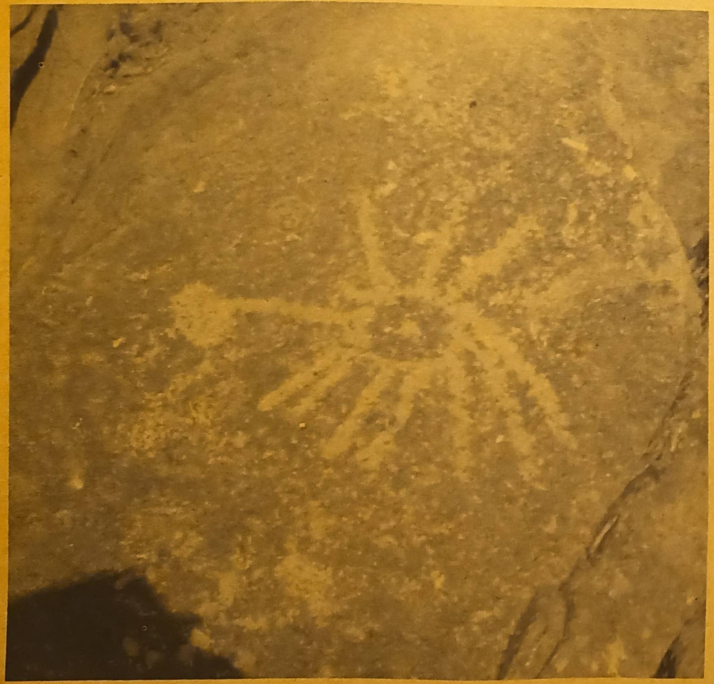
He did establish water rights to Reavis Creek and its tributary canyons for irrigating his crops. Superstition country is arid in late spring and summer. The increasing numbers of cattle began to wander where feed and water were best. As the cattle increased so did the amount of needed range. Offers were made several times to buy out Reavis, but each time he refused. The cattle began to eat crops and he, in turn, bothered the cows. So things stood when the hermit was murdered.

In the next 100 years when the people involved get to the "great-great ancestor" stage, the real story of this Superstitions mystery may be told. It will be quite interesting to learn how it was accomplished. I am sure it was from ambush as both white and red men had a deep respect for the old man's marksmanship. Man, deer or bear did not stand a chance when Reavis took aim. The Apaches who wandered over the entire southern end of the Pinal Mountain Range had a great fear of the Reavis rifle and usually left the tempting vegetables and fruit in the valley alone.

One of my favorite stories is how Reavis outwitted the Apaches who banded together in an attempt to make a raid on the ranch for food and livestock. Old man Reavis was smart enough to know he could not hold off fifty Apaches. He waited until they were near the cabin, threw open the door, and ran out screaming like a madman, tearing at his long matted hair and beard. His face and nude body were smeared with ashes. The Indians turned and fled the valley in terror. Reavis knew the superstition the Indians had about evil spirits that dwell in the body of a demented person. To kill this person would unleash these spirits to enter the body of the murderer. Reavis was never to have any more trouble from marauding Indians!



This Spanish trail marker signifies wealth. Extended arm with white oval at the end indicated direction to be followed.



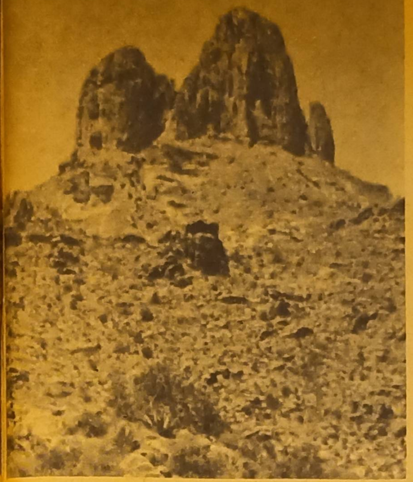
The hermit's appearance would have startled anyone. A tall, erect frame was accentuated by long, uncombed auburn hair and beard. Facial features were undistinguishable under the masses of hair and heavy brows. He never touched a comb to his shaggy tresses and never was known to change his variety of clothing—overalls, flannel shirt and an old coat when needed.

The only time his head was free of hair was when he fell from his horse one evening after drinking with some of the boys at Tempe. On their way home he took his spill about the time they reached Florence, and landed in cholla cactus. To rid him of this mat of cactus and hair, his friends had to cut it away. The next morning—sober—he saw his own face for the first time in years. Reavis had himself branded on the flank with an "H" so he could recognize himself if this ever occurred again!

There were many dancehall girls who tried, to no avail, to become the Eve in his Garden of Eden, complete with apples and serpents. He would push them aside saying, "I only drink with the men."

I like to think that, somewhere, old man Reavis, Jacob Walzer, Saltback Morris, Jake Lemon, and a score of others are lifting their glasses and having a good hearty laugh at us puny mortals scrambling over their land trying to unravel the snarl of mysteries they left behind, and thanking their God that they lived in an age where legends were *made* not *told*.

WE FOLLOWED our hand-drawn map as well as we could as we searched for the route to Hewitt Canyon. The map was hard to distinguish in the early hours before dawn. I had sketched the map the previous afternoon when our newly acquired friends at Apache Junction volunteered to make a test run to the unmarked entrance to Hewitt Canyon. They knew no one could describe the way to the mouth of the canyon, it had to be pointed out. The trouble most visitors encounter on their first visit to the Superstitions is that all canyons tend to look alike to one not familiar with the area. You can drive for hours on a good road winding through the desert but when you reach the end of it you do not know where you are or where you have been.



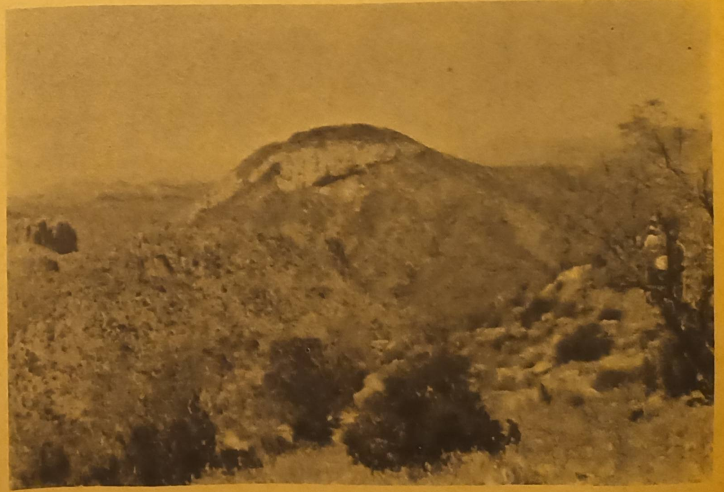
The Dutchman said, "From my mine I can climb up a short distance and see Weaver's Needle."

Our friends saved us many hours of trial and error. They pointed out the route step by step. We did very well remembering until we got onto the dirt roads. We reached the entrance of Hewitt Canyon just at daybreak. From there, we were on our own.

We drove up the canyon's sandy bed for several miles until we unexpectedly found a dirt road. We felt we could really gain time now, and time was what we needed most on our second attempt to reach our elusive cliff dwellings. There was so much smug self-satisfaction that Fate must have decided to give us a good slap on our large egos.

We came to a fork in the road, something we were totally unprepared to find. The lack of maps showing this road took a toll in precious hours. By now you have guessed—we took the wrong turn. We did Arizona a good deed, however, as we spent hours rebuilding five miles of road for them. The seven of us worked like a road gang filling four washed-out places that could not be crossed even by jumping. Bruised egos were completely toppled when we found our efforts had taken us to an old deserted mine and a fallen shanty.

The road we needed was above and to the north of us, a thin beige line running high on the mountain. As yet unbeaten, we put all the gear on our backs and started out on foot. After climbing through gullies, over rocks and under the forest boundary barbed-wire fence, we picked up the trail that would take us to Rogers Troughs. It was a straight-up hike for what seemed like hours on this old but passable road. We had to stop every few yards to get our wind during the perpendicular climb. Each rest period brought on fresh complaints about the wrong road that we had just put together with our bare hands, and our laughter could be heard echoing throughout the canyons.



Black Top Mountain is the most dangerous area of the Superstitions.

There was a gradual change in the vegetation. At Rogers Troughs green thickets and large trees made an ideal spot for camping. The concrete troughs catch the dripping water that trickles down through a small pipe from Rogers Spring, a few hundred yards higher up on Iron Mountain. It was difficult at first to spot the troughs because of the groves. At the north end of the valley we passed a corral. In the corral were the troughs, almost hidden, under the branches of a large shade tree. We stopped long enough to fill our canteens.

We knew there were several Indian ruins on Iron Mountain nearby, but we did not take time to explore the valley or the mountain slopes surrounding it. We were still determined to see if we could get to the cliff dwelling we found the week before while at Reavis Ranch. On the way from the troughs toward the creek bed in Rogers Canyon are some stone house ruins. Two sets of them lie fairly close together. It is hard to determine if they are of Indian or Spanish origin. The stone breastworks resemble the work of Spaniards. Placer gold had been found in the area around Rogers Troughs. Two cyanide tanks side by side sit like two deadly twins near the stone ruins. The word "Poison" is printed in black paint on the sides of the tanks.

We had never seen this part of the Reavis Trail and felt quite fortunate that we had come this far, a distance of twelve miles, on our own, through an unfamiliar section of the Superstitions.

Someone was on the trail ahead of us and by only a few minutes. We never did spot our phantom horseback rider all that day, even though his fresh tracks made him our constant traveling companion. Could this inhabitant of the Rogers Canyon area be the reason for the disappearance of our trail markers the week before?

Rogers Canyon was full of rivulets and pools of good cold water. We walked for several miles up Reavis Trail crossing from one side of the canyon to the other. Seven hours had passed since we started into the mouth of Hewitt Canyon. We figured the time it would take to get out would be cutting it pretty close and as yet, we were not within sight of our ruins. But we found our own tracks made the week before and had traveled the entire length of the Reavis Trail during our explorations.

We decided to gamble with the valuable space of thirty minutes and go on a bit farther. We lost! The thirty minutes found us still too far south of the dwellings. It would have been simple to spend the night in the canyon, as we had our supply of emergency rations and water was everywhere, but plans had already been made for early the next morning.

We had a 7:00 a.m. appointment with two guides, seven horses and a pack mule for a trip that was luckily saved for the last day of our scheduled stay in Arizona. We were going into the most dangerous area of the Superstitions—Weaver's Needle, Black Top Mountain, Needle Canyon and La Barge Canyon to obtain photographs of the Peralta master map.

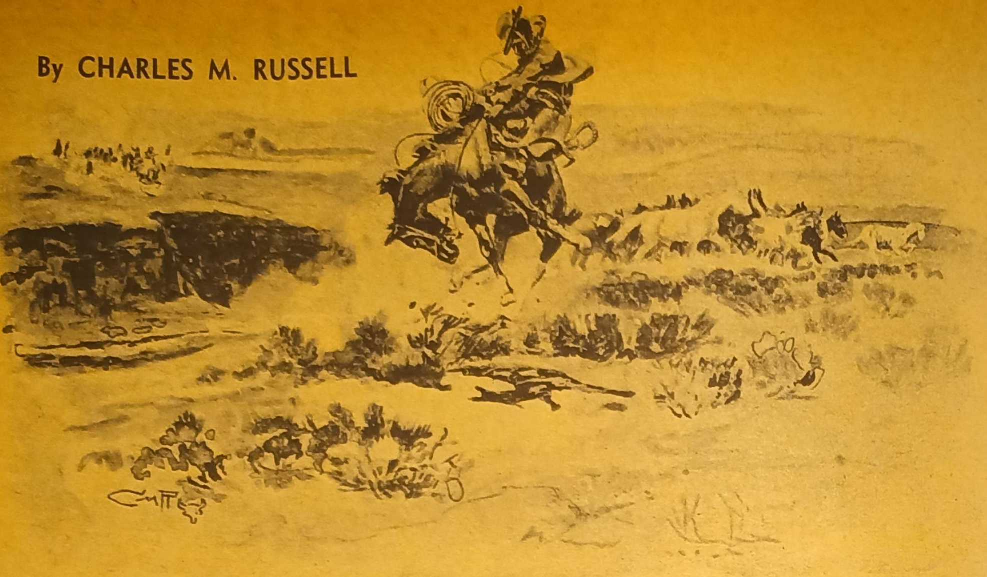
A footsore and heartsick group turned and headed back the sixteen miles to the start of Hewitt Canyon. The steep road kept us in a half-trot, slipping and sliding most of the way down. We had only one day left in Arizona. We know that next time we must spend at least seven days and nights in the canyon. It will take all seven days to explore this one area known to contain cliff dwellings.

WE HAD not anticipated that a twelve-hour horseback ride was about the most hazardous and bone-aching way to get into the mountains of any. We contacted Tom Daly who is rancher, wrangler and guide—the wiriest, toughest man we encountered. We asked if he could provide seven horses and a pack animal for the cameras, and if he could guide us past Weaver's Needle to La Barge Canyon to photograph the Peralta master map. In answer to our request to take us up on Black Top Mountain to photograph the Spanish petroglyphs he said he would, but he did not like the idea. The last two times he had taken someone up there he was fired upon.

Tom said, "They are just trying to scare you when they shoot, but they just

(Continued on page 55)

By CHARLES M. RUSSELL



"I'M SCAREDER OF HIM THAN I AM OF THE INJUNS."

A Pair of Outlaws

"THE worst hoss I ever rode," said Bowlegs, "I rode because I had to. It was a case of ride or lose my locks, an' I'm still wearin' hair.

"I was born in cow-country an' raised with a hoss under me. I've been ridin' 'em ever since, an' come pretty near savvyin' the animal. Of course, I'm a has-been now, but there was a time when I feared nothin' that wore hair, an' I've rode some bad ones. This snaky hoss is one I pick up on the range one time while I'm makin' a get-away.

"I ain't goin' into no details, but I'm with a trail outfit when I get into this jackpot. It's at a dance-house where we've been long enough for the redeye they're handin' us to get action, an' durin' an' between quadrilles, we're sure givin' full vent to our joy. I'm gettin' pretty well salivated an' it ain't no wonder, 'cause one drink of this booze would make a jackrabbit spit in a rattlesnake's eye.

"But we're all peaceful enough 'til the sport that runs this hog-ranch objects to the noise I'm makin'. There's a little back talk an' he tells me if I don't take my gun off he'll make me eat it. He's a bad 'ombry, already packin' notches on his gun, an' I'm not so drunk but what I can see the butt of a forty-five peepin' from his waistband.

"Knowin' this feller's back history, I ain't takin' no chances. I see his right hand drop; the next thing I know he's on the floor with a bunch of screamin' women over him, an' I'm backin' for the door with a smokin' gun.

"It's night, an' goin' from light into darkness that way blinds me for a second or two, but it ain't long till I got my hoss from a snortin', whistlin' bunch at the rack. An' the way that old cowpony pushes the country behind him, it looks like he savvies there's trouble.

"Our wagon's camped about a mile from this burg, an' it ain't long till I hear the bell of the remuda. This saddle bunch is pretty well trail-worn, but I've one tough, long-winded hoss in my string, an' as the one I'm on won't stand a hard ride, I'm thinkin' of changin'. So, when I locate the hoss-wrangler, after tellin' him my troubles, he bunches the remuda till I drop the loop on my top hoss. This wrangler's righter than a rabbit, 'cause when he shakes good-bye, he forks over all his cartridges an' what loose money he's got.

"I know the country south of me well enough, but it ain't healthy hangin' too close to the old trail, so ridin' wide of that, I travel the lonesome places. There ain't no wire in the country them days an' it's smooth sailin'. Cattle's plentiful, an' by the use of my six-gun it's no trouble to get beef. Three days later I'm crossin' the Cheyenne country. These people are pretty warlike, they've been havin' considerable trouble with the cowmen an' there's been some killin' done. You bet all you got they'd make it interestin' for any lonesome puncher they bump into. Knowin' this, I'm mighty cautious.

"WHAT'S troublin' me most is my hoss. I've covered anyway two hundred miles, an' he's gone tender. His feet's so wore down that once, lookin' back, I notice blood in his track, an' I can't help thinkin what a snap these savages would have if they'd run onto me ridin' this leg-weary pony.

"About this time I sight a bunch of hosses trailin' in to water. They're all Injun stock, mostly mares, barrin' one big, high-headed roan. If I can only get my string on him I'll be all right. But with this dead-head between my legs, how am I goin' to do it?

"The creek they're headin' for is pretty broken, an' there's a chance to cutbank him. So, droppin' in behind, I trail along easy, like I'm one of 'em. None of 'em notice me much but the roan; he keeps eyein' me over his shoulder, kind of suspicious. He's a rangy hoss with four white feet an' a bald face, one glass eye givin' him a snaky look. His tail's been trimmed out, an' saddle-marks tells me he's been rode.

"The only thing I don't like about him is his brands. He wears an iron everywhere you can burn a hoss—even his neck an' both jaws. He's burnt till he resembles a brand-book. I don't have to tell you fellers that's a bad sign. Whenever you see a hoss worked over this way, it's a cinch he's changed hands a lot of times an' none of his owners loved him. But then, again, if I'm pickin' a hoss for a long ride, give me a bad one. If he's an outlaw, he ain't got me beat none—there's a pair of us.

"When we drop down on the water I'm plenty pleased. It couldn't have been better if I'd had it made to order. She's cutbanked an' rim-rocked up an' down as far as I can see. But the minnit we start down the slope, Mister Roan gets nervous. With his head higher than ever he starts circlin'. He's seen me makin' my loop, an' it looks like he's on to my hole-card. Right here the creek makes a half-circle, with walls on the opposite side from eight to ten feet high.

"These hosses act pretty dry, for the minnit their feet hit the wet, their muzzles go to the water; all but the roan—he's too busy watchin' me. I've got him cut-banked an' he knows it, but he's figurin' on breakin' back. The minnit my rope hits the air, he starts for the open, head an' tail up, but the hum of my swingin' rope turns him, an' back he goes through the mares. With one jump, clearin' the creek, he's agin the bank an' tryin' to climb out, but it's too many for him. He's back with a bull rush, knockin' one mare down an' jumpin' over another. He comes out of there like a bat out of hell an's got the whole bunch stirred up now. Reefin' my tired hoss from shoulder to flank, we jump to the gap. I ain't takin' no chances; my rope's tied hard an' fast, an' with one backhand swing my loop settles on his shoulders, but grabbin' the slack quick, I jerk her up his jaws. Then throwin' all my weight in my left stirrup, with my right spur hooked under the cantle to help my hoss, I wait for the jar.

"THIS old hoss I'm ridin's one of the kind that holds with his hindquarters toward the animal. He's spread out an' braced, but bein' weak, when the roan goes to the end of the rope, he's jerked down. The roan's in the air when the rope tightens, an' he goes plumb over, turnin' a summerset an' hittin' the ground with a thud that stuns him, givin' my hoss time to get to his feet.

" 'Tain't two seconds till the roan's up and comin' at me through the dust, with his head an' ears up an' tail flagged; he sure looks warlike. Trottin' up within twenty-five feet of me he stops with all feet braced an' whistles long an' loud. He's trying to buffalo me. It's the first hoss I ever see that I'm plumb scared of. From his looks he's a man-eater; he's got me pretty near bluffed.

"But sizin' up the hoss under me, it's a groundhog case—climb the tree or the dog'll get you. So slidin' from the saddle I start walkin' up on the rope. He stands braced till I reach his nose; then strikes like a flash of lightnin' with both front feet, just touchin' the rim of my hat. By the way his hoofs cut the air, it wouldn't have been healthy for me if I'd a-been under 'em.

" 'If that's yer game, I'll head it off,' thinks I, so goin' to my saddle hoss I unloop the McCarthy from my hackamore. An' buildin' another loop, 'tain't long till I got him by the front feet. When I get him hobbled good, I unsaddle my old friend an' start fixin' for high ridin'. From the looks of the roan's hindquarters, an' the way he's muscled an' strung up, it's a safe bet he'll go in the air some. When I'm bridlin' him he tries to reach me with his front feet, but bein' hobbled, can't do much. He stands humped, but quiet enough when I'm bridlin' him. He can't fool me; by the way his left ear's dropped down an' the look he's givin' me with that glass eye, I savvy he's layin' for me.

"Of a sudden he swings his head a little to the right an' straightens his ears. Lookin' between 'em, I spy a band of about as nasty a-lookin' Cheyennes as I ever see. One look's a plenty; the way they're stripped an' painted, I know they ain't friendly. These Injuns have sighted me now; I can tell that by their yelpin'. They ain't more'n half a mile off, every pony runnin' an' every rider kickin' him in the belly.

"It's sure a case of hurry up, so tightenin' the cinch till the roan grunts, an' loosenin' the footrope, I grab the cheekpiece of the bridle an' pull the roan's head close 'round to me. Grippin' the horn of the saddle an' chuckin' my foot into the stirrup to the heel, I step across him. The minnit he feels my weight, the ball opens.

"Mister Outlaw squats an' then shoots up straight as a rocket—so straight I'm afraid he's comin' back over, but he don't. He lands all spraddled out. The next jump he catches his head, weaves an' sunfishes, hittin' the ground one leg at a time, all stiffened, givin' me four separate jolts. This mighty near loosens me, but hookin' my right spur in his shoulder an' grabbin' leather with all hands, I get back. When he goes up again he shakes himself like a dog leavin' water, an' the saddle pops an' rattles, causin' me to lose my left stirrup. As I never did get the right one, I'm sittin' on his ribs.

"He'd unloaded me all right, but I hear shots from the Cheyennes an' it scares me so you couldn't a-chopped me loose from him with an axe. If he turned summersets in the air he couldn't pile me now. I've made my brags before this that nothin' that wore hair could make me go to leather, but this time I damn near pull the horn out by the roots, an' it's a Visalia steel fork at that.

"I'VE heard many a hoss bawl before, but this one roared, an' I believe if he'd a-loosened me he'd a-eat me up. I'm scareder of him than I am of the Injuns, 'cause there ain't a man on earth, white or red, that could hit me with a scatter-gun while I'm goin' through these motions. The work I'm doin' would make a professional trapeze performer look like a green hand. Sometimes I'm behind the cantle, then I move over in front of the horn. Finally he kicks my hat off—either that or he makes me kick it off.

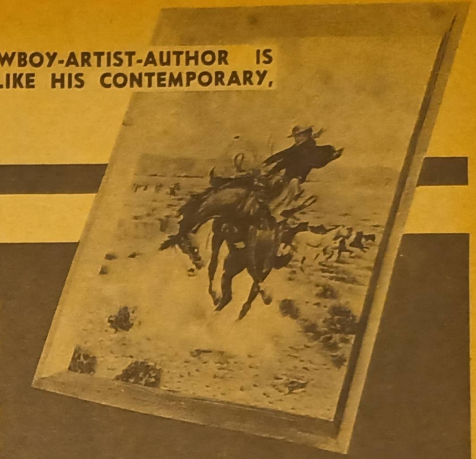
"I don't know how long this lasts, but I'm gettin' mighty dizzy when the roan raises his head from where he's had it hid, an' straightenin' his back, starts runnin'. Talk about swift hosses—in two jumps I'm goin' the fastest I ever rode; it looks like he's tryin' to run from under me.

"He's sure bustin' a hole in the breeze. Once a Cheyenne ball tears the dust off to one side, but it don't scare me none. At the gait we're goin', if a ball did hit me it wouldn't break the hide. It wouldn't no more'n catch up with us. When I look back over my shoulder there's a chain of dust a mile long, an' it appears like the Cheyennes're backin' up. The wind roarin' in my ears finally brings me to my senses, an' shaking the hair out of my hands I get the reins an' start lookin' over my layout. The roan's mane's pretty well pulled out from his ears back. My hat an' six-shooter's missin' an' there's one cantle-string tore out, but barrin' these trimmin's we're all right an' there's no kick comin'. The hoss under me can beat these Injun cavayos any distance from a squirrel's jump to the Rocky Mountains, so I bid farewell to the Cheyennes.

"Yes, fellers, that's the worst hoss I ever forked, but that same roan packed me many a hundred miles to safety, an' as I said before, gentle hosses is all right, but give me a snaky one for a hard ride."

From: TRAILS PLOWED UNDER, by Charles M. Russell. Copyright 1927, Doubleday, Page and Company.

THIS BRIEF NARRATIVE BY THE GREAT MONTANA COWBOY-ARTIST-AUTHOR IS TRULY ONE OF THE GEMS OF WESTERN LITERATURE. LIKE HIS CONTEMPORARY, REMINGTON, CHARLIE RUSSELL "KNEW THE HORSE"



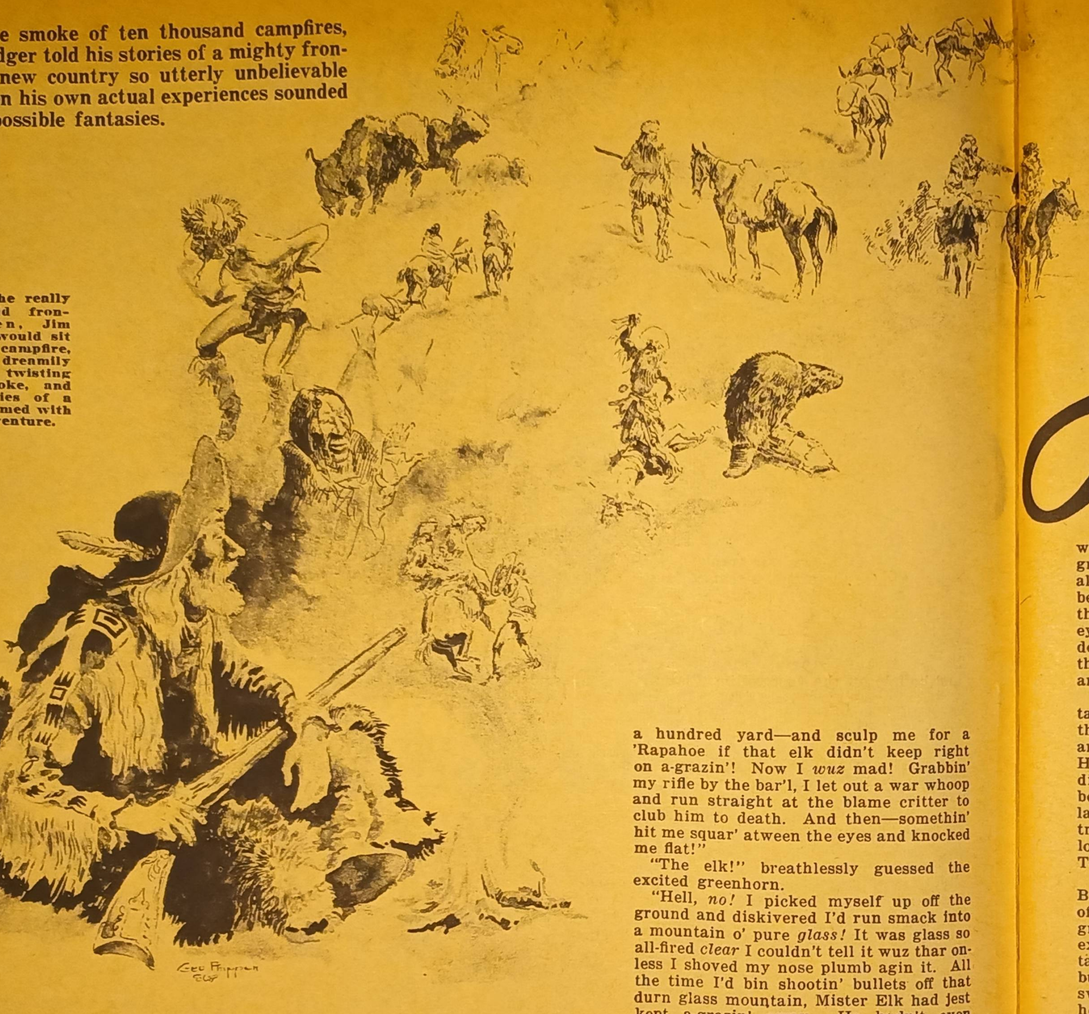
In 1953 when we started TRUE WEST, we asked Randy Steffen to do a color painting from the Russell Sketch on opposite page (with proper permission of course) to use as the cover on our first issue. It received so much comment (especially the Spanish-type hat which was authentic cowboy garb in certain sections in those days), that we decided to repeat it for our present cover since about 99% of you haven't seen it.

Jim Bridger
KING OF MOUNTAIN MEN

By NORMAN B. WILTSEY

Illustrated by Geo. Phippen

Over the smoke of ten thousand campfires, Jim Bridger told his stories of a mighty frontier—a new country so utterly unbelievable that even his own actual experiences sounded like impossible fantasies.



One of the really great old frontiersmen, Jim Bridger would sit by a campfire, looking dreamily into the twisting blue smoke, and tell stories of a life crammed with high adventure.

HE-COON of the famed Mountain Men of the old West, Jim Bridger was unchallenged even by Kit Carson himself. No veteran *hivernant* in all the hardy, roistering brotherhood of free trappers could make Injuns and beaver "come" like Jim Bridger; nobody could spin a taller yarn at Rendezvous campfires than he.

"I mind one summer up in the Crow country," Bridger would lead off solemnly over a feast of roasted stuffed buffalo *boudins* and sizzling hump ribs, "I was out meat huntin' and run onto this yere valley that had been cursed long ago by a great medicine man of the tribe. Everything in that valley wuz petrified: deer, elk, b'ar, birds—*everything!* The trees and grass and flowers wuz standin' thar jest the way they wuz a hundred year ago when the medicine man put the curse on 'em. I swang my axe agin' a tree and broke off a hunk of the blade. I spotted a grouse a-sittin' on a pine branch over my head and drew a bead on it to git supper meat. Boys, I shot that grouse's head off—and found it wuz *stone!* I kin tell you I pushed out of thar in a hurry and moved on over the next ridge."

Here the crafty narrator would pause. Invariably, some awed greenhorn, fresh out from St. Louis, came up with the expected: "What happened *then*, Jim?"

"Wal," Bridger would continue, deftly meeting opportunity head-on, "right off I seed this yere big elk standin' broadside to me 'bout two hundred yard away. I threw down on him with my rifle and fired, but he never jumped nor flapped an ear—jest went on a-grazin' in that purty mountain meadow ez if I waren't shootin' at him at all! Now that seemed a mite onreasonable to me—missin' an elk broadside at two hundred yard. Figgerin' mebbe I'd shot high, I reloaded and sneaked up forty-fifty yard closer. This time I held low and careful right behind that elk's left shoulder and squeezed off the ol' Hawken smooth and easy. Again nuthin' happened! Wal, boys, by now I wuz plumb flabbergasted. Yere wuz this fine big elk jest beggin' to be dropped—and I couldn't sink a ball into him no way. I tried a third shot at a hundred yard—and sculp me for a 'Rapahoe if that elk didn't keep right on a-grazin'! Now I *wuz* mad! Grabbin' my rifle by the bar'l, I let out a war whoop and run straight at the blame critter to club him to death. And then—somethin' hit me squar' atween the eyes and knocked me flat!"

"The elk!" breathlessly guessed the excited greenhorn.

"Hell, *no!* I picked myself up off the ground and diskivered I'd run smack into a mountain o' pure *glass!* It was glass so all-fired *clear* I couldn't tell it wuz thar onless I shoved my nose plumb agin it. All the time I'd bin shootin' bullets off that durn glass mountain, Mister Elk had jest kept a-grazin' away. He hadn't even knowed he wuz bein' fired at! But yere's the real *amazin'* part of it . . . "

At this highly dramatic point of his yarn, Jim would pause to stoke his boilers with another foot or two of piping-hot buffalo sausage and thereby allow the entranced greenhorn to step helplessly into the deadly punch-line.

"What was *that*, Jim?"

"Wal, son," replied Bridger, reaching for the long-stemmed Indian pipe that hung in a buckskin case from his left shoulder, "that glass mountain wuz shaped so durn cu'rous it made a perfect telescope. All the time I wuz stalkin' that damn elk and figgerin' him within easy shootin' range, he wuz ackshally more'n *twenty mile away!*"

OVER the fifty-year span of his Western travels (1822-1871), Jim Bridger explored more previously unknown country than any other white man of his century. He roamed the Rocky Mountains from end to end and side to side and back again. He skirted the towering, frosty peaks of the Grand Tetons and penetrated the grim, dark bastion of the Big Horns which guarded the matchless hunting grounds of the Sioux. He trapped beaver along crystal mountain streams, camped beside deep, still mountain lakes, until that moment unseen by any save Indian eyes. He shot grizzlies, elk and mule deer on the timbered Western slopes of the Continental Divide, killed antelope and buffalo on the vast rolling Plains.

In the colorful vernacular of the Mountain Men, wherever his "stick floated"—there Jim went. Prowling the Wind River and Sweetwater Mountains with "Bad Hand" Tom Fitzpatrick in 1823, Bridger discovered South Pass—that famous notch between the looming ranges where, in later years, toiled the covered wagon trains of the stubborn pioneers on the long haul westward over the Oregon Trail.

Another time, Jim drifted alone down Bear River in a bull boat constructed of fresh buffalo hides stretched taut over green willow hoops. Reaching a broad expanse of water that proved salty to his taste, Bridger stripped off his greasy buckskins and plunged in for a cooling swim. He found to his amazement that he could sit upright in the buoyant brine without being forced to move his arms and legs to stay afloat. He'd found Great Salt Lake—though he didn't realize that fact until much later. Paddling luxuriously about offshore, Jim decided that he had come upon an arm of the Pacific Ocean!

Bridger's boldest ramble took him far North into Canada—"jest a-follerin' the North Star." Hitting the Mackenzie River at Great Slave Lake, Jim followed the mighty "River of the North" clear down to the Arctic Ocean before turning reluctantly toward home. Eighteen months on the trail—"without sightin' ary white man nor onct tastin' bread"—the wolf-gaunt wanderer returned to his favorite stamping ground along the Tongue River near its junction with the Yellowstone. For once the great explorer's itching feet were bruised and sore—his incurable wanderlust temporarily satisfied.

SUBSEQUENT rovings took the Mountain Man through "Colter's Hell," (present-day Yellowstone Park) where he spent two months in solitary delight enjoying the dreamlike wonders of Nature. When Jim showed up at Rendezvous that summer to trade beaver for powder and ball and "possibles," nobody believed the rare tales he had to tell. Jim mentioned casually immense boiling springs, "fountains" that jumped out of the ground; higher than a pine tree every minute or two, and a mysterious river that somehow divided its current in a high pass to flow in two different directions and toward two oceans . . .

The boys, whooping it up around the blazing campfires, roared appreciatively at this whopper. Joyously they proclaimed Jim the best liar in camp for his "river that flowed two ways t'onct." Why, even loony John Colter had never spun such an ol' fuzzy as that!

Bridger, a victim of his own lurid reputation as a spinner of tall tales, philosophically accepted the situation and proceeded to embroider the story of his Yellowstone adventures with wildly fanciful details of steaming waterfalls a thousand feet high, huge two-headed grizzly bears and nine-foot white Indians with single eyes exactly in the center of their foreheads! Why, one o' them double-headed b'ars had taken out after him and if it hadn't got mixed up at a fork in the trail, trying to foller both paths t'onct, ol' Jim would been a gone beaver for sure!

No doubt about it, that Rendezvous was a hilarious success and one that was long remembered by the free trappers.

Today, unique Two Ocean Pass ranks with the geysers and boiling springs as a major tourist attraction of Yellowstone Park. Fittingly, if belatedly, a small but lovely lake near the Pass has been named Bridger's Lake in honor of Jim.

JIM BRIDGER knew the Indians as no other man of his race was ever to know them. He learned their languages, respected their customs and religions, admired their desperate, hopeless struggle to defend their ancestral hunting grounds and sacred mountains from the steadily encroaching whites. Yet, with clear, objective logic, Jim saw that the Indian's ancient way of life was doomed. The beaver was also doomed. That knowledge spurred Jim into piling up a healthy stake for the future while he could.

At all times, whenever possible, Bridger carefully avoided trouble with the Indians. His luck held out for years until, on a trapping trip deep into the forbidden mountain stronghold of the Blackfeet, Jim received the only serious wound he ever suffered—a Blackfoot arrow shot into his back. He carried the three-inch iron arrowhead in his body for three years. At the Green River Rendezvous of 1835, the missionary-doctor, Marcus Whitman, removed the arrowhead in a difficult and painful operation.

The surgery was performed without benefit of anesthesia except for a mug of "Taos lightning" (trade-whiskey) administered to the patient at the start. A mouth-sized chunk of seasoned hardwood was also provided for Jim to bite on when the doctor's scalpel dug deeply. The arrowhead was located with the point penetrating a large bone, bent like a fish-hook and encased in cartilage.

Indians, watching Whitman work on the stoical trapper, were greatly impressed with Bridger's unflinching courage. One pockmarked brave grunted in approval when Jim's excruciating ordeal was over, and exclaimed in the Blackfoot tongue: *"Hai!* The white man is a warrior. His heart is big—like a Blackfoot's!"

Bridger spat out his well-chawed hardwood chunk and snarled at the Blackfoot in his own language: "I spit at you, Ugly Face—*so!* Two of you dog-eaters already have died in payment for this wound—and the score is not yet even!"

Actually, the Crows and Shoshones were the only Indians Bridger ever liked and trusted, claiming that they were "durned near white" in everything but the color of their skins. Jim's good friend, Chief Washakie of the Shoshones, privately doubted the value of the compliment, but tactfully kept his opinion to himself.

Sometimes for months at a stretch Bridger lived "pure Injun" with the Crows or Shoshones, shooting buffalo with the hunters, fighting beside the warriors against raiding Sioux or Blackfeet, and kicking high and whooping savagely in the victory dances around the village fires after driving off the horse-stealing invaders. "Real fancy doin's!" was Jim's enthusiastic description of life among the Indians. "Sets a man up till he's ready to spit in the eye of the first grizzly he meets in the trail!"

WHEN the beaver creeks petered out in 1843, Bridger astutely turned trader and built a post on Black Fork of the Green River in what is now southwestern Wyoming. The post—soon to be known as Bridger's Fort—was ideally situated on the Oregon Trail, and near the Mormon Trail to Salt Lake. The North and South Platte wagon routes met near Fort Bridger, making the post a convenient meeting place for Plains travelers.

Jim and his shrewd Mexican partner, Louis Vasquez, made money at Fort Bridger selling horses and supplies to the emigrants and trading for robes and furs with the Indians. In 1851, visiting his boyhood home in St. Louis, Jim took along a load of fine furs and sold them for $40,000. He bought a farm at Little Santa Fe, Missouri, with part of his share of the money and hotfooted it back West. Later, when Fort Bridger was raided and burned by the Mormons in 1854, Jim set-

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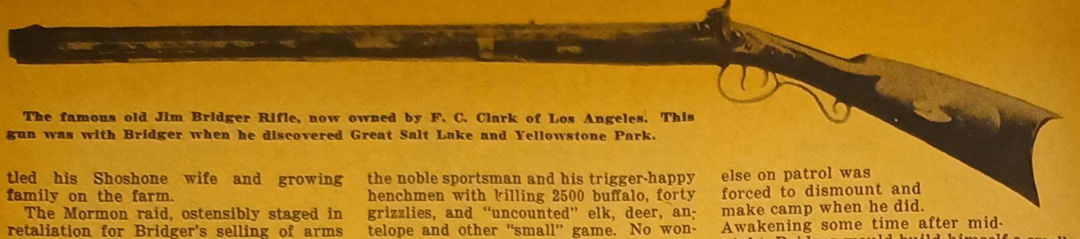


The famous old Jim Bridger Rifle, now owned by F. C. Clark of Los Angeles. This gun was with Bridger when he discovered Great Salt Lake and Yellowstone Park.

tled his Shoshone wife and growing family on the farm.

The Mormon raid, ostensibly staged in retaliation for Bridger's selling of arms and ammunition to the Indians, ruined Jim financially. The fruits of eleven years of hard work were reduced to smoldering ashes in three hours. Livestock, merchandise, furs, buckskins and buffalo robes all disappeared for a total loss to the partners of more than $200,000.

Jim appealed at once to Washington with an urgent request that the Government take immediate and drastic action against Brigham Young, leader of the Mormons. Nothing came of this wrathful demand, however, and Bridger rode over to Fort Laramie to discuss the matter with the Army officers there. The CO cooled off the seething frontiersman by promising to write personally to Washington corroborating Jim's story of the raid. Whether or not he actually wrote such a letter isn't known, but at least the CO qualified as a diplomat.

While at Laramie, Bridger accepted an excellent offer to guide Sir George Gore, wealthy Irish nobleman touring the West, on a grand-scale hunt through the Yellowstone country to the mouth of Tongue River. Jovial Sir George was just the medicine Jim needed to take his mind off his troubles. Gore had brought along plenty of potent Irish whiskey from his County Sligo castle, and enjoyed sharing a nip or two with his guide around the campfire in the frosty evenings on the high Plains. The nobleman's impressive retinue was composed of "forty men, 112 horses, twelve yoke of oxen, fourteen dogs, six wagons and twenty-one carts." Sir George and his forty game executioners were all armed with heavy sporting rifles made by noted English gunsmiths Richards and Manton, and they kept the weapons hot from morning till night in a valiant attempt to exterminate all wildlife on the Plains.

BRIDGER certainly could use the high wages paid him by Sir George, and he duly appreciated the nobleman's fine whiskey. Soon, however, he got to feeling squeamish about the hunting party's ruthless game slaughtering.

"I got plumb sick o' killin'," admitted Jim after the trip. "Forty guns a-blazin' and a-barkin' from sunup to sundown, 'till the ground wuz fair covered with dead and dyin' critters. We shot hundreds o' buffler for nuthin' but the hides, tongues, hump and backstrap—and left the rest o' the meat to the coyotes. Seemed like Sir George wanted spec'mens of everythin' that flew or crawled or run—and we got 'em all! I ain't never seed so much blood and guts at one time ez I seed that summer. *Wagh*—turned my stummick fair inside out jest to smell the awful stink!"

The Gore party wintered on the Tongue, continuing their murderous barrage on all species of game whenever weather permitted. The Government stepped in finally to stop the frightful butchery, and Sir George and his merry marksmen packed their trophies and expensive guns and departed for St. Louis in a considerable huff. Jim Bridger wasn't sorry to see them go.

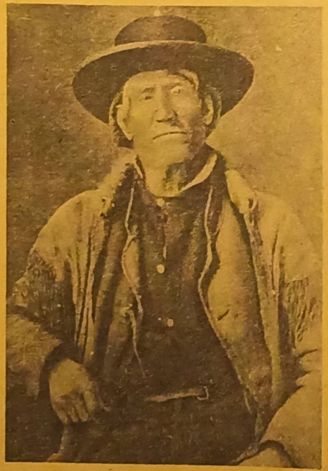
Contemporary records modestly credit the noble sportsman and his trigger-happy henchmen with killing 2500 buffalo, forty grizzlies, and "uncounted" elk, deer, antelope and other "small" game. No wonder that even Jim Bridger's cast-iron stomach revolted at the "awful stink!"

Still fuming over his ruination at the hands of Brigham Young's "Destroying Angels," Jim used some of the money paid him by Sir George to journey to Washington and present his case personally to President Buchanan. He got the usual Washington run-around at first, but doggedly persisted until assured that the Government would investigate the devastating Mormon raid on Fort Bridger. President Buchanan ordered troops to Utah in the summer of 1857. Jim wangled a job guiding the expedition.

The comic-opera "Mormon War" ended in the spring of 1858 with General Albert Sidney Johnston's troops in possession of the Mormon capital city of Salt Lake—and the Mormon leader, Brigham Young, in possession of a full pardon from President Buchanan! Disgusted by this ironic and ridiculous turn of events, Bridger quit the Army and went home to his Missouri farm. He found that his Indian wife had died in his latest absence, leaving him with a new son, William.

JIM now had four children to support and educate on no income and very little cash. He solved his pressing financial problem by signing for another hitch as scout and guide with the Army.

Bridger presented a thorny problem in turn to spit-and-polish Army disciplinarians. Ignoring military regulations—which he regarded as "mostly damn foofuraw"—the veteran Mountain Man did just about as he pleased. If he became tired late in the afternoon after a hard ride he dismounted, tied his horse, rolled up in a buffalo robe and went to sleep. Since Jim was Chief Guide, everybody else on patrol was forced to dismount and make camp when he did. Awakening some time after midnight, Bridger would build himself a small fire and roast fresh meat for his "supper." After eating, he'd like as not squat by his fire until dawn "singin' Injun" and beating lustily on a tin pan in lieu of a tom-tom. When disturbed troopers profanely objected, Jim blandly invited them to join the horrendous concert. Boot-throwing was not resorted to by the suffering cavalrymen in the prudent fear of provoking deadly retaliation from the knife-slinging scout.



Jim Bridger, greatest of plainsmen, scouts, guides and trappers.

A bedeviled young captain, in a desperate last-ditch measure, dug a copy of Shakespeare's plays out of his pack and read aloud to the Chief of Scouts. Bridger, sprawled on a buffalo robe by the campfire, smoked his long Indian pipe and listened to Henry V, Macbeth and Hamlet—listened and marveled and finally dozed off to sleep, while the captain crept wearily away to his tent breathing a fervent prayer of thanksgiving to the immortal Bard.

Independent as a Sioux war chief, and every bit as exasperating to the top Army brass, Jim Bridger nevertheless proved invaluable as guide, scout and constant advisor to the military during the savage Indian wars following the Civil War. Nobody understood the Indian's peculiar psychology as well as Jim, when and where he was likely to attack, in what force and by what route. An expert trailer and reader of Indian sign, Bridger seemed to possess an uncanny sixth sense warning him of imminent danger. The cry of a bird, the howl of a wolf, the startled movement of a bighorn sheep grazing on a distant mountain slope—all these told him volumes. Sometimes, paradoxically, the *lack* of these familiar signs and portents indicated more to Jim than their presence. Wise commanders quickly learned to respect the old Mountain Man's judgment: the cocky CO who disregarded his "hunches" was dead sure to run into trouble. General Pat Connor, for example, figured Jim for a fool and paid for the mistake with his command and very nearly with his life.

BRIDGER served as Chief of Scouts with Connor's Powder River Expedition in the summer of 1865. The Sioux, under Red Cloud and Crazy Horse, had been raising hell all summer long, and the Army commanders in the field determined to teach them a lesson even while Washington strove to negotiate a new treaty in the interminable series of pacts and counter-pacts with the arrogant hostiles.

General Connor, a hotheaded Irishman with supreme contempt for the fighting qualities of all Indians, issued the following order to his officers and men on that July morning the troops left Fort Laramie for the Powder: "You will not receive overtures of peace and submission from the Indians, but will attack and kill every male Indian over twelve years of age." In effect—since Indian boys didn't carry birth certificates—Connor had issued a brutal death warrant for every red-skinned lad over the toddling age

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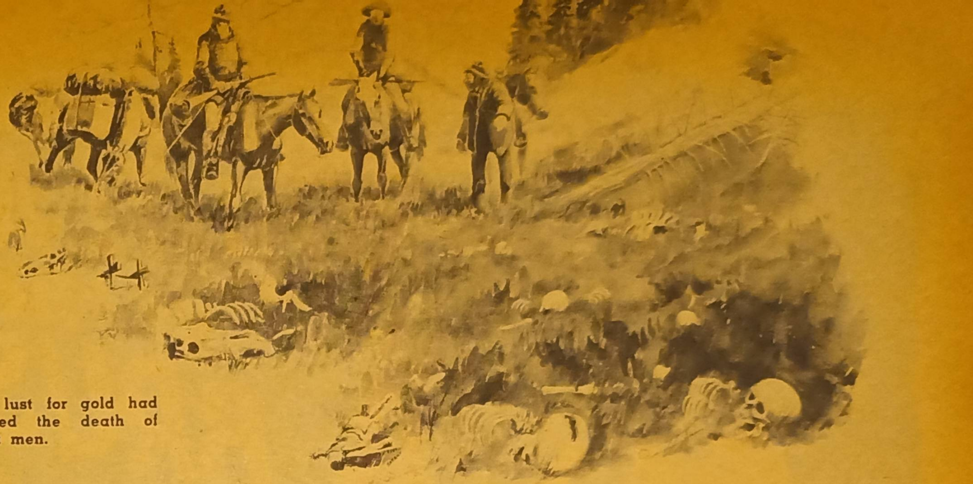

The lust for gold had caused the death of eight men.

Murder In The Bitterroots

By FERRIS M. WEDDLE

Illustrated by Geo. Phippen

Human life was cheap when greed for gold surged hot through unscrupulous scallawags in the old hell-camp days.

BILL PAGE did not like Chris Lowery's twisted, cruel face. He did not like murder talk. But Bill Page was a coward and a weakling. So, he listened.

"Lloyd Magruder's packing two thousand ounces of gold, Page," Lowery said. "We're gonna kill him and the other four. You keep out of it, and you'll get your share. Plummer thinks we'll be bringing it back to Bannock, but he's gonna be fooled. We're heading for California."

Mention of the high-class killer, Henry Plummer, completely demoralized Page. He nodded assent. He took the mules and horses and pastured them that evening, wondering if he could rake up the courage to warn Magruder.

Only six days before, Lloyd Magruder had started out from Virginia City, Montana, for Lewiston, Idaho. He'd made a cleaning in Virginia City, and had written his wife that he was coming home. Magruder had been aware of the fact that at least three of the men he had employed were petty crooks. These three were Chris Lowery, Jim Romaine, and Doc Howard, but he had confidence in his other five men—enough confidence that he was not afraid of trouble.

Soon after the night meal, Page grabbed his blanket and rolled up in it to one side. He watched the others around the fire, until only Lowery, Romaine, Howard and Magruder remained.

"Better take a look at the animals," the rugged, honest Magruder said.

"I'll go along with you," Lowery offered.

Magruder nodded and stooped to light his pipe from the campfire. Lowery picked up an axe standing nearby and brought it crashing through the man's head. Old Bill Phillips, who had been sitting among his blankets, started to rise, but Jim Romaine did not give him a chance. He leaped upon the old man, his Bowie knife flashing.

Doc Howard jerked the axe from Lowery's hand, and in a few quick strides stood over the bedroll of Robert and Horace Chalmers. Two quick blows, and the brothers did not stir again. Only Charley Allen remained, and while he struggled out of his blankets, Howard dropped his axe, and discharged both barrels from Magruder's shotgun into the man.

Sick, and frightened, Page crawled out of his blankets to join the three jubilant outlaws, who were pawing over the loot.

Soft flakes of snow had begun to fall, and it covered the crimson patches of blood.

"What a beautiful job," Lowery gloated. "With this snow coming down, no one will find a trace of the crime until next spring. By that time we will be long gone."

HERE Lowery made his mistake, for the driving snow forced the outlaws to seek shelter in Lewiston, Idaho — the one town they had hoped to avoid. However, it was possible that they could catch a stage for Walla Walla.

"Sorry, boys, no stage until morning," the clerk told them. "We don't sell tickets. Just enter your name on a waybill, and you pay just before leaving."

Doc Howard was doing the talking. He looked at the other three with some uneasiness, and at the short, bearded fellow who hovered near a stove. He, Romaine and Lowery were too well known in Lewiston to give their real names. Someone was bound to connect them with Magruder's disappearance. So, without any imagination at all he gave their names as John and Joseph Smith, and Thomas and James Jones.

With collars pulled up around their faces the four made their way outside, and toward the Luna House for rooms.

"Say, Doc, did you recognize that fellow in there?" Lowery asked, uneasily.

"No, why?"

"I'm not sure, but I think it was Marshal Hill Beachy."

"Well, what's the difference. He ain't got nothing on us."

Howard's voice did not sound as confident, however.

Back in the stage office, burly, bearded Hill Beachy said to the clerk, "Something funny about this, Joe. I know three of them fellows, Romaine, Howard, and Lowery. Had some trouble with 'em once. They're petty thieves, and I know they been freighting for Lloyd Magruder in Virginia City."

"But Magruder ain't expected in for several days," protested the clerk. "His wife heard from him."

Beachy's eyes narrowed. "He could have started earlier. I'm gonna have a look-see at those hombres."

Beachy owned the Luna House. He examined the register. It carried the same names Howard had given the clerk. Why should they decide to change their names all of a sudden? Worried and suspicious, Beachy went around to the back, and looked through the window of their room. After a long while he left, seeing nothing out of the ordinary.

Still convinced, in an odd way, that the four had something to do with his friend Magruder, Beachy watched them take the stage for Walla Walla next morning.

A few days later, someone came in from Virginia City, and confirmed Beachy's suspicions. The four had left with Magruder's party! Beachy was certain his friend had been murdered. But everyone said he was crazy when he

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OUTLAWS of the BRUSH

By J. FRANK DOBIE

"Brindle," one of the Shriner collection which represents about all that remains of the Texas Longhorns. Photo by E. P. Haddon.

Editor's Note: If you enjoy true stories of the cattle country, then you've got a treat coming. Here's a whiff of the flavor of THE LONGHORNS, copyright 1941, by J. Frank Dobie, with permission of Little, Brown and Company, Publishers.

THE word "outlaw," however legitimized by common usage, is a betrayal. The cattle I am thinking of made their reputations in fierce, hardy, persistent, resourceful, daring efforts to maintain freedom. They refused to be "dumb driven cattle." Unlike the orthodox ox, they knew not their masters and would not be led to the slaughter block. Instead of being outside the law, they followed the law of the wild, the stark give-me-liberty-or-give-me-death law against tyranny. They were not outlaws any more than a deer or a wildcat in evading man is an outlaw. Like the antelope, many of them would not go to man-erected windmills to drink, even when there was no other water. Some of them were wilder than any other animal that eats grass. Yet, because the American language does not have any such accurate, convenient and readily understood words as the Mexican *ladino* or *cimarrón*, I must use the inaccurate and man-smug term *outlaws*.

Among these outlaws, revealing the law of the wild that the Longhorn blood coursed to fulfill, was one owned by Marcus Snyder, a Texan now ranching in Wyoming.

"About 1913," he wrote me, "I bought five thousand steers, four-year-old and up, from William Randolph Hearst's Babícora Ranch in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico. At that time the Babícora stock were bred up just enough to make them better than common 'Mexicans.' They were good Longhorns. I placed these steers on about 150,000 acres of land leased from the University of Texas in the high country north of Sierra Blanca, Texas, some of it very rough.

"As we approached this range, a big snow-white steer with the widest spread of horns I had ever seen kept lifting his head and looking way off towards the Diablo Mountains. He must have been ten or eleven years old. As soon as we turned him loose, he pulled out for the Diablos. He got in the roughest part of them. Those roughs were his natural home. Water was scarce, and from where he ranged there wasn't a drop for twelve miles. He would water about twice a week, as we discovered, and then only at night. A round trip of twenty-five miles over rocks did not bother his feet in the least.

"I wintered the steers and the next fall began shipping. We got the white steer in a roundup, but failed to hold him. So he went back to the Diablos for another year. He was as wild as any blacktail deer I ever saw but more cunning in keeping out of sight. Lack of timber prevented him staying permanently hidden. Shipping time came again. We rounded in Old Whitey once more, took extra precautions, and this time held him. When he saw no chance for a break, he'd get in the middle of the herd, as far away from man as possible.

"One evening we shut him up, along with several hundred other steers, in the shipping pens at Sierra Blanca. We had to hold over until next morning before loading out. As men familiar with stock pens know, the big railroads build theirs high and strong. I stayed in the little Sierra Blanca hotel that night. Next morning, before going to the pens, I met a man who had just driven in from the north in a car. He said that about fifty miles out he had seen our white steer going in a long lope towards the Diablo Mountains.

"During the next two or three months we got about that many glimpses of him and saw that he was getting very fat. The range was good, and that run back home must have put Old Whitey's glands to functioning. One day after cold weather came, I took a long-range rifle, a couple of pack mules and a cowpuncher and went to the Diablo roughs. I shot the steer. We dressed him and brought him in. He must have weighed around fifteen hundred pounds. That night the beef froze where it was hanging outside. It was as tender as calf when cooked and at the same time tasted like big beef ought to taste. I believe it was the best I have ever eaten."

ONE time the McGill Brothers caught a blue outlaw steer in the tall back chaparral on the Soledad Ranch in Duval County, Texas. They tied him to a tree and left him all night. The next morning they drove a gentle bunch to him, necked him to a lead ox, and started back for the pens. The blue outlaw appeared to be thoroughly "cooled off." He went along tractably enough for several miles until he reached a high hill overlooking the pens, house and two windmills of the old Soledad Ranch, which true to its name, personifies solitude—a dot on the vast *brasada*.

There, overlooking the pens of gray and brown mesquite poles, the blue outlaw stopped. That prison cell was burned in his memory more deeply than on his side. The lead ox could not budge him. A vaquero beat on him with the double of his rope, spurred him on the loins. He lay down. The vaquero jabbed him, twisted his tail until the bone broke. He ground his teeth and would not budge. He showed no sign of being overheated; he appeared to be comfortable. The vaquero rubbed sand in his eyes. He shook his head and lay still. The ox was unyoked, and with a loose rope looped around his horns, the outlaw was staked to a stout clump of brush. Then the men went on, leaving him there in plain sight of the Soledad pens.

They came back in the evening. He still lay where he had been left, facing the pens. Thus he remained for two days. Then, without having risen once, he died. The vaqueros said that he was *acalambrao*, that he "dies of *sentimiento*"—of a broken heart.

Cattle like this knew when work began in their pasture. They were wise to the movements of men. Having sensed danger, they frequently jumped a fence into another pasture, sometimes several fences, returning to their accustomed range only after the cow hunt was over.

One time while a neighbor of ours was branding some Mexican steers in our pens, a rusty-colored fellow jumped over the fence and was away in the brush before anybody could get on a horse. He stayed in one pasture two or three years, making himself scarce whenever cattle were worked, nobody trying very hard to get him. Then I bought him, range delivery. We roped him and tied him to a tree, and overnight he broke off one of his long, twisted horns and slipped out of the rope. He ranged on the west side of the ranch, and he got so that if he heard a yell or saw two men riding at the same time, he would jump a fence and go on west.

Finally he decided that the brush was better to the east, and I heard of him ten miles away. A year later I learned that he was twenty-five miles to the south. He had become a regular rambler. I sold him by letter to the owner of the pasture in which he was temporarily stopping. I suppose he killed him. I have heard of gentle horses virtually starving to death because of an allegiance to a certain barren plot of ground. The allegiance of a genuine outlaw is to whatever covert he can find anywhere that will preserve his liberty.

BACK in the seventies, old outlaw steers that yelling riders rushed with other cattle out of the great *brasada* along the lower Nueces River would sometimes stay with a herd while it was being worked, pawing, bellering, trembling with rage, occasionally making futile charges towards a horseman who neglected to give them plenty of room, until they dropped dead from sheer emotional exhaustion.

The propensity among wild cattle to hook is probably determined as much by the shape of their horns as by internal urge. The steer I am going to tell about now had horns so turned that he could have ripped the guts out of an elephant. He knew his power.

Rocky Reagan was working in the famous Jack West pasture in Live Oak County, Texas. One morning his cow crowd—a half-dozen men—held up a little bunch of cattle in an opening. A Mexican roped a six-months-old bull calf, and the calf went to bawling.

"Suddenly," related Rocky Reagan, "I heard a noise in the brush, almost back of me. I looked. There charging out of it, his head raised like a buck deer's and the coarse hair on his back standing up, came a big old red-roan steer. He had been tolled out of the bushes and out of his wariness by the calf's bawling. He had heard nothing else. When he saw men, he wheeled back into cover. He had long been wanted. The horse I was riding was about run down. It happened that our cook had come out with us that day, and his horse was fresh. It didn't take a minute for us to change saddles. I had an idea where the old roan had gone, and I hit his trail on the run.

"Before long I got a glimpse of him tearing over some low chaparral. He was moving! He was fresh, and he was not the kind to lie down as soon as he came to a heavy thicket. I heard some bob wire snap. I went over the broken fence too. The roan led across this pasture for a couple of miles and jumped another fence. I let down the wire and followed.

"In a thicket of *quebradora* (white brush) I got close enough to throw my rope and caught him by only one horn. At the feel of the rope, instead of breaking loose, as he could have done very easily, he wheeled like a cutting horse and rammed one of his sharp horns into the breast of my mount. The horn went in six or eight inches. The horse stood there trembling. Maybe I was trembling too. For what seemed a good while the steer remained in his tracks, working—gouging—his horn deeper into the horse. Then he gave a jerk, turned, and left. I was helpless, without any sort of gun. The horse died.

"SIX months later we jumped that same steer about eight miles from where he had hooked my horse. I roped him and the rope broke. A Mexican then roped him and we tied him to a tree. The next day I sent this Mexican and another hand with a lead ox to bring the outlaw in. When they got to the tree, they found the steer had broken the *peal* (tying rope) and gone *pa' 'lla*.

"This was in the fall. Winter is the best time to run wild cattle. The leaves are shedding so that a man can see farther through the brush; horses can run longer in the cool weather without becoming windbroken, and cattle are not so likely to die from getting overheated. That winter four of my men jumped the old roan and took after him. Right at the Nueces River one of them roped him. He went to fighting, and while the rider was unfastening the rope from his saddlehorn, the steer killed his horse. Meantime the other three boys had come up and were roping him. One of them caught him, but when Old Roan raked his horse, he turned him loose. The steer made for a third man and snagged his horse's hip.

"Old Roan now had one dead horse and two wounded ones to his credit, all in a pile. And he had two ropes dragging from his head. He swam the river and stopped in some drift on the other side. He stood there a while shaking his head, trembling with rage, and then he stepped back into the deep water and swam out by the four men who had chased him. The man on the untouched horse did not have the nerve to tie into him. I did not blame him. I would not have tackled that steer on a tired horse for a carload of polo ponies.

"The winter passed. Spring came and nobody had seen hoof or hair of the roan outlaw. Then one day, back in the Jack West pasture, a Mexican and I jumped him in a thicket. He was no longer dragging the ropes that had been left on him. We twined him, threw him down, and tied him doubly fast to a strong mesquite. We went to camp, brought out the best lead ox we had, necked the two together, and put the pair in a bunch of steers to be shipped.

"The roan came along until he was within sight of the railroad pens. Then he stopped, refused to budge an inch farther. For half an hour or so the ox worked him around—or, rather, worked around him— trying to coax and drag him on in. Finally, the ox decided to rest a while himself and lay down. The roan stood there in a clearing looking at the pens. Directly he dropped dead. I think he was dead before his body hit the ground."

AFTER the ranges were all claimed and fenced, the outlaws that escaped ropes and bullets were comparatively few. Sid Graham's story of one escaper gives me particular satisfaction and pleasure.

His mother was a keen-horned, dun "Spanish" cow driven up from the south to the great Shoe Sole Ranch bordering the Snake River in Idaho. Despite panthers and wolves that prowled the broken country she chose to range in, she always raised a calf, and she became a marked animal. One year her calf—a bull—escaped branding. She kept it in solitude. When it was a yearling, she charged a man, riding to throw her in the roundup, and hooked his horse in the hip. But the yearling was branded and castrated. Upon being turned loose, he butted down one brander and set the others tearing out. His mother smelled with solicitude the blood and burned hair on his body. As

(Continued on page 38)

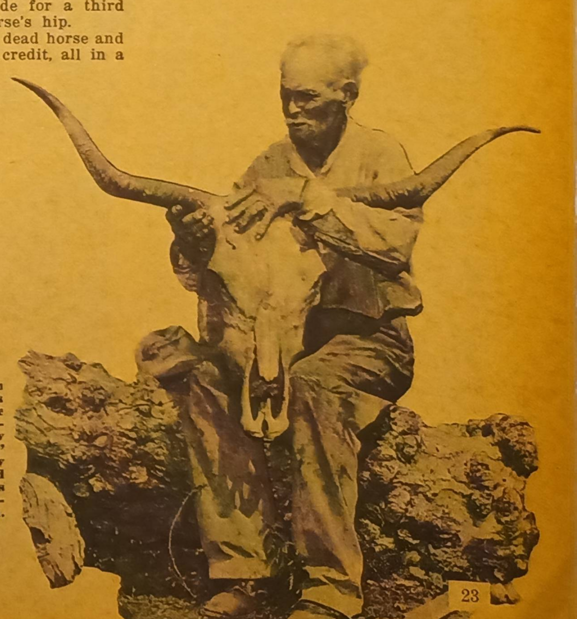
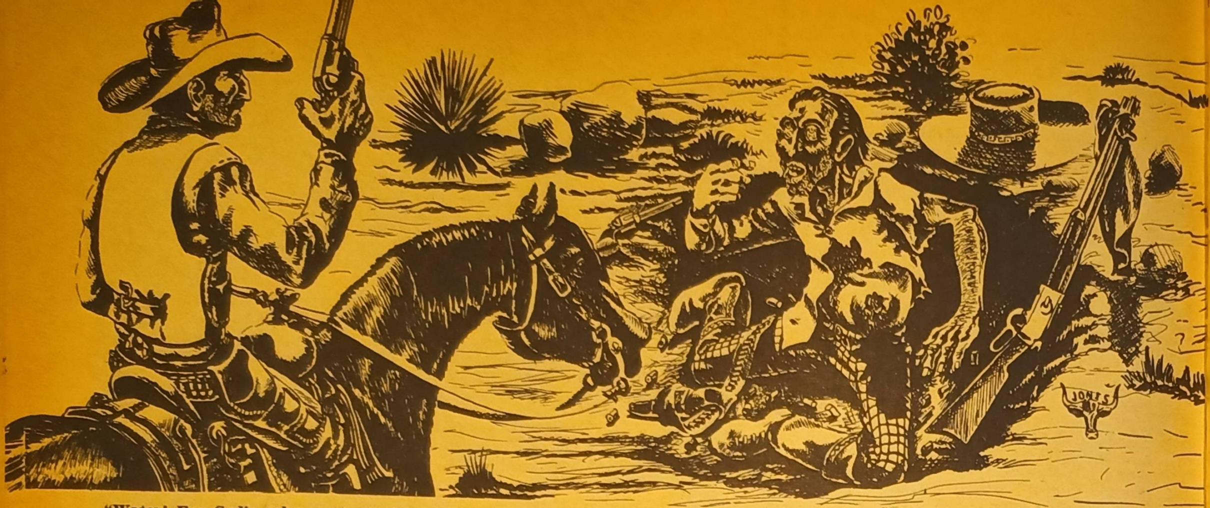


Photo by Elwood Payne

On a little ranch down in the brush of Live Oak County, Texas, "Uncle John" Webster raises Longhorn cattle "because they are the true Texas breed." He sells off the progeny only with reluctance and keeps the skulls of old ones that die. He has a shed-room half full of them.



"Water! For God's sake—water!" the agonized plea came in a hoarse whisper. But they didn't give him water. With less compassion than he would have shown a rattlesnake, Johnson raised his gun and put a bullet between the fugitive's eyes.

A GHOST NAMED JONES

By NELL MURBARGER

Illustrated by James T. Jones

They thought he was dead, those hot-heads of Nelson. Slumped in the bottom of a heat-blasted retreat, blood-shot eyes rolling feebly in their gaunt sockets, clothes matted with blood, they'd seen Jones get shot full in the face. But did he die? He was reported seen in blood-caked dungarees pleading for water, wandering through rough canyons, lurking in the shadows around lonely campfires, and haunting the Queen City mine—dad-gum, but this'n's a woolie-booger!

HARPS and halos weren't standard equipment at any of the frontier mining camps, but the boom towns of Nelson and Eldorado, Nevada, were more than plain tough. They were trouble camps—jinx camps. Mines were reputedly haunted. There wasn't a tunnel in the canyon that didn't seem to carry the Indian sign. Men fought without reason—killed and died without knowing why.

A few of the inhabitants began to call it the Eldorado Curse, or the Old Spanish Curse. But for the most part, Nelson simply wagged its head knowingly and thought about the ghost named Jones . . .

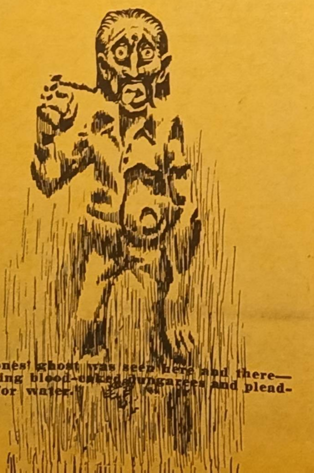
It is common practice to label frontier settlements "lawless." At Nelson and Eldorado, however, it was more than a figure of speech—it was dire, incontestable fact. Between these neighboring towns, and their county seat of Pioche, there stretched 160 miles of desert and scorching *mal pais*.

Before word could be carried from Eldorado Canyon to Pioche, and response made by the sheriff, even a spectacular killing was forgotten, the victim buried and the killer lynched or lauded, as public opinion demanded.

It was this complete absence of law and order which was responsible for the organizing of Nelson's first vigilante committee . . . and it was the vigilantes who were responsible for the ghost named Jones.

The trouble started when John Nash, of the Eldorado Mining Company, determined to acquire the Queen City claim adjacent to his holdings. It wasn't his intention to purchase the Queen but to jump it. He engaged a trio of gunslingers—Bill Piette, a renegade; Jim Harrington, a California gunfanner; and Jim Jones, a half-breed Piute. According to the agreement, Nash was to pay the men $5,000 each to deliver the claim into his hands.

The deadline for performing annual assessment work was drawing near when the Queen City's non-resident owner sent a representative to take care of the labor necessary to hold the claim. With this emissary neatly eliminated by a few strategically placed shots, it became a simple matter to hold the Queen until the assessment deadline had expired, after which the mining claim was automatically thrown open for refiling.



"Jones' ghost was seen here and there—wearing blood-caked dungarees and pleading for water."

WITH the Queen in his possession, Nash became greedy. Nobody knows for sure, but it is believed that he entered into a side agreement with Piette to kill Jones and Harrington. With that detail out of the way, it is possible that he intended personally to liquidate Piette, thereby silencing his confederate in murder and retaining for himself the mine as well as the fifteen grand.

Even though the prelude is somewhat vague and controversial, old timers of the area are reasonably agreed concerning the ultimate payoff.

Jones was washing his face one morning when Piette stepped up behind him and raised his gun to fire. Apparently sensing his danger, the half-breed whirled half around as the gun barked. The .45 slug, intended for his back, caught him in the side.

Only momentarily stunned, Jones snatched up the heavy powder keg, on which the washpan had been setting. He broke it over Piette's head, sending him reeling to the floor. Jones then grabbed his gun and fired a single shot into his assailant.

All this had been done spontaneously, as a man might slap at a bumblebee which was biting him. Now that he had time to think, Jones remembered how Nelson's bloodthirsty vigilantes had dealt with the last half-breed suspected of killing a white man. It had been a demonstration calculated to inspire proper fear in the souls of all half-breeds . . .

Jones didn't loiter around to see if the same treatment would be meted out to him. At the moment distance seemed far preferable to discussion. He took to the desert hills, and with him he took Piette's Winchester.

Aroused by the shots, camp residents soon discovered the seriously-wounded Piette, who, upon being restored to consciousness, related his version of the affray. Quite naturally, it was a version guaranteed to send the vigilantes in red-eyed pursuit of the 'breed.

Tracking was made easy by the crimson trail Jones left in his wake. With the blazing desert sun beating on his head and the gaping wound in his side continuing to leak like a perforated waterbag, the weakening fugitive soon realized that further flight was impossible. His only hope was to make a stand, and perhaps the night would bring some means of escape.

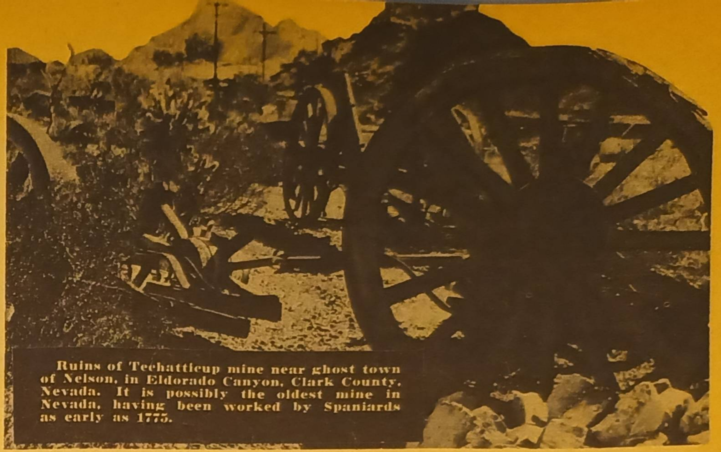
In this particular section of the desert there was neither brush nor large boulders to supply cover, but there was an abandoned prospect hole. Gratefully, Jones tumbled into it. It was only a shallow hole but, by crouching carefully against one side, he could effectually screen himself from the advancing vigilantes, now less than a half-mile behind.

It was only a matter of minutes until the citizens' posse had surrounded the improvised breastworks; but there action ceased. Despite his injury, the 'breed's aim was still authoritative.

FOR two days and two nights the beleaguered fugitive huddled in the precarious safety of his shallow pit, cooked and frozen by turns. He had neither food nor water. As morning of the third day broke over the desert, the man's thirst, and the throbbing pain of his infected wound, were no longer endurable. Ripping a section from his bloody shirt, Jones knotted it to the barrel of Piette's Winchester and elevated it in token of surrender.

His gun held at ready and a dozen other rifles covering his advance from the rear, Tom Johnson warily approached the prospect hole. Coming to a halt on the rim, he looked down upon a revolting sight.

Slumped in the bottom of that heat-blasted retreat was the tragic lump of what had been a man. Blood-shot eyes rolling feebly in their gaunt sockets, Jones' clothing was matted with blood, the wound in his side was crawling with flies and vermin, his lips parched and cracked by fever.



Ruins of Teehatticup mine near ghost town of Nelson, in Eldorado Canyon, Clark County, Nevada. It is possibly the oldest mine in Nevada, having been worked by Spaniards as early as 1775.

"Water! For God's sake—water!" the agonized plea came in a hoarse whisper.

But the vigilantes didn't give him water. With less compassion than he might have shown a rattlesnake, Johnson raised his gun and put a bullet between the fugitive's eyes.

Satisfied that there was no longer threat of danger, other members of the vigilante committee scrambled up the slope to swarm around the hole. A half dozen additional shots were pumped into the prostrate heap. A little sand and a few rocks were kicked over the body, and Jones' sanctuary became his grave.

Jones was dead and Jones was gone . . . but Jones was not soon forgotten.

IN the first place, Piette didn't die. In the second place, he and Harrington told such widely-conflicting tales that the townsfolk began suspecting that Piette's original account of the shooting hadn't been altogether gospel.

Two hundred miles of this kind of country separated the two hell camps of Nelson and Eldorado from law. No wonder they were ruled by law of the .45!

And, before long, those who had contributed most to Jones' death were experiencing conscience trouble—trouble which manifested itself in the usual fashion.

Jones' ghost was seen here! Jones' ghost was seen there! Wearing blood-caked dungarees and pleading for water, it allegedly wandered through the rough canyons bordering the Colorado River, or came to lurk in the shadows around lonely campfires. In particular Jones' ghost was supposed to haunt the Queen City mine.

Nash became half petrified with terror when darkness threatened to overhaul him in the vicinity of the mine. Jones' ghost, it seemed, had a distressing habit of emerging from the tunnel to stalk silently and accusingly at his side.

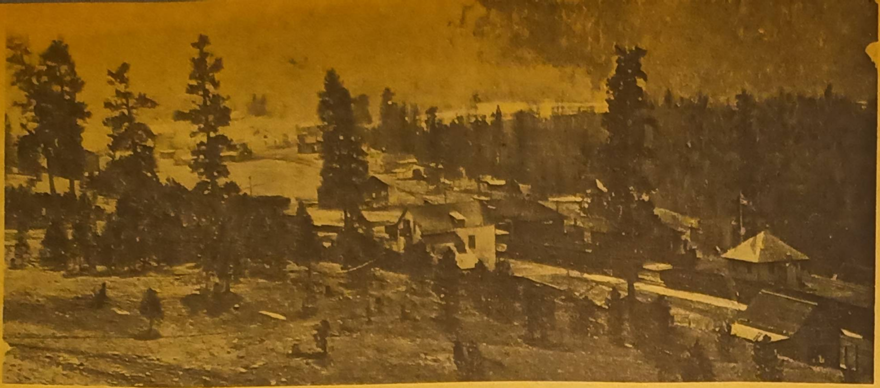
Not only through the medium of strange tales, but by unexplainable accidents, the kidnapped mine eventually fell into such bad repute that workmen refused to enter its underground chambers. For all his elaborate conniving, Nash found himself stuck with a white elephant, only slightly used but completely jinxed.

With the half-breed's death, not only Nash and the Queen City, but all of Nelson and Eldorado seemed to fall under the curse of blood. Old Man Davis, owner of the Bridal Chamber mine, was mysteriously murdered for no apparent reason. Next, it was "Cap" Fuller, part owner of the Eldorado. Soon afterward, a prominent man named Jim Warren was found dead in the street, a slug in his head. Suspicion seemed to point toward Piette, but there was no proof.

Retribution, guilty minds began whispering—grim, bloody retribution. It was the wronged Jones' spirit, his ghost that had come back to plague those who had shown him no mercy—to put a curse of blood and death throughout that whole country. It was directly responsible for the series of killings that had beset the hapless desert area. This suspicion persisted, grew stronger.

And so it went, a killing-or-so a month until 1897 when a sober, good-natured

(Continued on page 36).



Early view of Gateway taken from hill east of Kootenai Flats. Photo courtesy W. H. Minteer.

"Let 'er Rip" MONTANA!

By E. G. STAHL
with OLGA W. JOHNSON

I SAW a chunk of the West, as it was back in the old hell-raising days, when I walked into Gateway, Montana, back in 1901.

Two men were running like hell down the main drag. One of them was a little gambler they called "Jimmie, the Nibbler." He was hauling freight for Canada. And he was hauling it fast . . .

In this particular case, Canada wasn't far away. Gateway was a border town, located just east of the Kootenai River where it runs into Montana.

A big man was hot-footing it after Jimmie. He was the town marshal. He was angry; he was cussing; he was waving a gun. Big Jim Breen wasn't a man to fool with in those days.

People came pouring out of saloons, stores and even a couple of bawdy houses. They started running behind the marshal. They wanted to see the show. They were cheering for Jimmie . . . I thought this queer—pulling for the refugee from justice instead of the law. But, of course, at that time I didn't know my Gateway.

Jimmie was winning that race. It was surprising everybody, because Jack Breen was supposed to be the fastest man on his feet in that frontier town. Maybe Jimmie was winning because he had more reason to win. You run fast when the man behind you has a six-gun he might use any moment.

When Breen saw that the little gambler was going to beat him across the international line, he started firing.

Jimmie didn't take any chances. He jumped over the edge of a 100-foot bank, and tumbled down into the Kootenai. Then he waded the shallow channel to one of the islands.

The marshal made a little invasion of Canada, going over the line himself. But after a brief "goodbye message" to Jimmie, he came back to the United States and walked into the Stockholm Bar.

I had just hit Gateway with a wagonload of beef from our ranch in the Terriault Meadows for the Stahl Brothers. I hitched my team to a post and followed the crowd into the saloon.

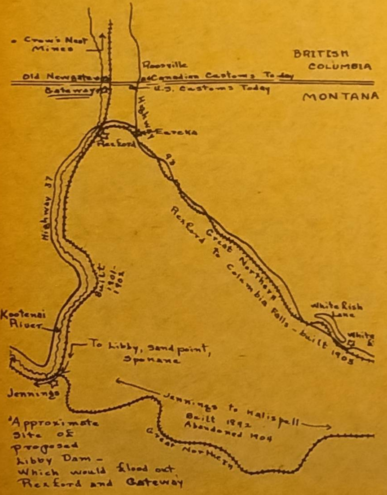
Breen ordered a beer, took a long pull and said, "That fellow deserved to get away."

I wondered why. So I asked a man next to me at the bar.

"Because he outran Jack," the man said. He glanced at me sharply, as if to confirm by eyesight what his mind had told him when I asked such an obvious question—that I was a stranger to Gateway. "Jack is supposed to be the fastest man in these parts," he added.

"What did the Nibbler do?" I asked.

"Too much nibbling," the man said. "Got drunk, started raising hell and bustin' up the landscape. It's all right to raise hell here, but don't start damaging personal property!"



Map of the boom town area.

GATEWAY was only one year old then—it had its start in 1900. In a way, you might say it wasn't the same as the Old West at all, for the Old West of 1900 wasn't the same as the Old West of the rip-snorting days of Abilene and Tombstone, back in the Seventies and Eighties.

But tough?

If you'd spent the time I did in that town, I think you would have seen the Old West at just about the right time. I was only nineteen. I wanted to see life in the raw. I began to see it. I saw things during my brief acquaintance with Gateway that few people living today ever saw—anywhere.

The little town grew up all of a sudden. It was a sort of headquarters for crews surveying the line of the Great Northern Railroad from Jennings, Montana, to the Crow's Nest coal mines close to Fernie, in British Columbia. Gateway quickly became so rowdy and so unpredictable that its citizens started calling the town "Let 'er Rip! Montana—the wildest place west of the Mississippi!"

The steel gangs were there when I first saw it. The town was at the high point of its glory—if you want to call it that. By Gateway glory I mean seven saloons, two red-light dance halls, two hotels, and a general store.

They told me there were about a thousand people in the town, half of them railroad workers.

The Stockholm, owned by Jerry Phillips and Joe Mace, was the biggest saloon. It was also called the Variety Store. All in one big room were stage, dance floor, bar, roulette, and other gambling games. The balcony above one side of the room looked into what were called "private booths."

It was up to Jack Breen to keep law and order in Gateway. He really worked at it. But Breen had his troubles. He had part of them because there wasn't any jail. If the Nibbler had been caught, for instance, Breen would have had to keep the little gambler under guard in a tent until he could take him by stage to the jail in Kalispell, ninety miles away.

Breen was a big man, but mighty active. He was about the size and build of Jim Jeffries, the famous heavyweight everybody was talking about at that time. On the Sunday before I got to Gateway, Breen had run a foot race with Johnnie Long Time Start, a Kootenai Indian marathon runner who got to be pretty well known later by the name of Long Time Star. Long Time Start was all right at marathon running, but Breen beat him in the hundred yard dash.

REPORT TO
U.S CUSTOMS
AT
ROOSVILLE, MONTANA

Left: Present day sign at the sight of old Gateway-Newgate customs house. The customs office has been moved to Roosville, Montana. Left center: Riverside Hotel today. Center right: Oldtimer E. G. Stahl and his horse, "Little Buck." Photo taken in 1900, at Kalispell, before he went to Gateway. Right: The international boom town, Gateway, today.

SOME of the damndest things happened in Gateway! One night two riders from the south had to stay overnight. They had to wait until a veterinarian inspected their horses before they could cross over into Canada. Most of their waiting was done in the balcony of the Stockholm. They got to drinking with a dance hall gal. The three were feeling pretty high before long. When the regular show got underway down on the main floor, they grabbed the gal, held her bare behind over the balcony rail and yelled, "Three cheers for the Star Spangled Banner!"

Nobody minded.

That same evening at the Stockholm, I saw Funnyman Hobbs and his woman trying to put on a show on the stage. The main stunt was to toss a stovepipe hat from Hobbs' toe onto his head. But he was too loaded with red-eye to balance on one foot. His woman kept stopping the song she was singing to call Hobbs a lot of names for getting drunk.

The act was a flop. Nobody seemed to mind that, either. Everybody went right on doing what he wanted to do. Cock-eye Jack, who played poker for the house, was working up a big game. Kid Rodgers was trying to get a prizefight promoted between him and "pugilist" Red Connor.

Red got his reputation mainly from beating up and robbing drunks. Red wasn't doing any hankering to fight the Kid.

About then somebody pitched some coins to Hobbs' woman on the stage. Hobbs got quick on his feet then and beat her to the money. He bought another bottle of hooch with it and went out. His woman followed, still giving him hell.

I said something to the people close to me about it being hard to tell who was the toughest, Hobbs or Mrs. Hobbs. They thought calling her "Mrs." was funny. They laughed.

A small troupe of *girls* came on the stage to sing and dance. One I remember was called Sensational Nell. Another, Swede Tillie. The pinkest-faced one was Hootchy-Kootchy girl. The biggest was Peerless Annie.

The final call after each dance was "promenade to the bar" where drinks were passed out to the girls. They got fifteen cents commission on each drink they sold and put it in their stockings. Girls working the booths off the balcony sold beer for a dollar a bottle and got 40 cents commission.

After an hour things were getting pretty noisy. Cock-eye Jack was having trouble keeping the poker players from taking a poke at each other. Then we heard Hobbs' woman screech. She came in running, her partner following. Face bleeding, hair down, dress torn—she was a sorry looking sight.

Hobbs went right on beating her until some of the men stopped him. Breen came in then and took Hobbs off to the prisoner's tent. Doc Dempsey was called over from Newgate (just across the line) to patch up the woman, who was being comforted by Hootchy-Kootchy Kate.

Doc came into the Stockholm easy and confident, wiped the blood off the lady's face, felt her over, and prescribed whiskey for the patient and the doctor. That was his usual remedy, Peerless Annie told me. It worked that time.

THE business men of Gateway (mostly sellers of liquor and entertainment—including women and gambling) depended greatly on the floating population of the railroad construction men, and on the butchers and riders of P. Burns Company (which had the railroad beef contract) to keep them going. Then there were riders trailing horses north into Canada. They made short stops.

The permanent residents were the customs men, the Great Northern railroad agent, and a few businessmen who sold such things as food and clothes. Newgate, across the line, wasn't as big or as lively.

After the big fight, the Hobbs woman had gone out to board at Murray's sawmill. Hobbs was turned loose as soon as she left town.

Finally, I started home, I stopped at the mill, and the offended lady friend of Hobbs gave me a message to take on down to Judge Copeland, who had a homestead cabin on the river flat.

She asked Judge Copeland to bring charges against Hobbs for beating her.

The old judge questioned me a spell, then said, "Young man, let me give you some advice. If you ever have occasion to beat up a woman, beat her around the butt. The judge will be so tickled to see the marks of evidence he will let you off free."

At that time there was a derelict Swede called "Ole the Swamper" who cleaned the Stockholm floors and spittoons. He was harmless. When Ole got a few drinks under his belt he would sing, "They call me Ole, but Ole's not me name. I lost me brudder and me sister, too. But they call me Ole yoost the same."

A little later Ole went to Harrisburg, another boom town. There he annoyed a bouncer in one of the saloons. The bouncer hit Ole on the head with a stove poker and killed him.

Nobody seemed to pay much attention to the incident—they took it as a joke. The saloon people threw a scare into the young rancher who was serving as Justice of the Peace. He brought in a verdict, after the inquest, of death from heart disease.

Doc Dempsey was more of an American than a Canadian those days. He had fallen for the Hootchy-Kootchy girl and only went back to Newgate once in awhile.

When the steel gang was about to leave Gateway on its way north, the town got so scared over the possibility of losing all that business to neighboring Newgate that something had to be done. Doc Dempsey came to the rescue by faking a smallpox scare, quarantining the town so nobody could cross the border. They hauled Peerless Annie, shanty and all, out onto the prairie as a quarantine measure.

Doc Dempsey got $2.50 for each vaccination. The hoax worked out fine for him.

CROOKED O'Brien was a big, thick-set man with stooped shoulders, bull-neck, and a bullet-head. He kept one of the saloons. O'Brien liked to play tough and shoot up the town. But one night he carried his fun too far, even for Gateway. He tore up some property and injured a good, tax-paying citizen. Next day,

(Continued on page 49)

E. G. Stahl and his dog, Tommy Whiskers, in 1906. Stahl spent many years with the U. S. Forest Service.

He Out-robbed JESSE JAMES

Bill Miner robbed his first stagecoach in 1859 with a cap-and-ball pistol. Fifty-two years later, Bill Miner robbed his last railway train—a hold-up career ranging from musket to machine gun!

By EUGENE PAWLEY

Illustrated by Randy Steffen

IT was a cold night in May of 1904. A Canadian Pacific express train was lumbering out of the Rockies and through the foothills, less than two hours out of Vancouver. It puffed around a curve, and the brakes began to squeal.

The engineer recognized the light flashing ahead. It spelled DANGER to a railroader—and only a railroader would know how to give it.

As the locomotive ground to a stop, a figure arose behind the cab and climbed down beside the engineer and fireman. The man had a gun in each hand. In the glow of the firebox the engineer and fireman could see that he was masked.

"Keep quiet and keep still," the bandit ordered.

At that moment, Expressman John Thornton was facing another masked robber in the express car. And, as the brakeman hurried forward to find out why the train had stopped in the wilderness, another gunman ordered him to uncouple the express car.

There was nothing to do but obey. Then the hold-up gang ordered the engineer to run the engine and express car several miles farther along the line, until they came to some flares. Beside those lights, a fourth robber, also masked, was waiting. He entered the express car. Between them, the train robbers picked up $7,000 in gold and more than $200,000 in bills and bonds.

"Now back up and get your train," the leader of the bandits told the engineer.

By the time the crew reported the holdup, and officers arrived at the scene, the gun-toting quartet were gone. They had vanished into the wild, trackless country.

That was Canada's first train robbery. And even though the Canadian police failed to catch the robbers, they did come to one decision. They decided that Bill Miner was the head of the bandit gang.

And they were right.

TAKE a look at just a few of the things Bill Miner did and right away you'll say it didn't happen. You'll say, if something like that happened, people would have been talking and writing about Bill Miner all these years instead of wasting their time on bush-leaguers like Jesse James.

Bill Miner robbed his first stagecoach in 1859. That was before the Colt Frontier Model .45 came into being. The Colt Bill Miner carried then was a cap-and-ball gun.

Bill Miner robbed his last railway train fifty-two years later, in 1911. That was in the days of the automatic pistol, the airplane, the gangbuster—modern style. That means a career of robbery ranging from the musket to the machine gun!

In between that first robbery and the last one, Bill Miner came damn-near driving the law-and-order boys of two nations stark crazy. He had them talking to each other and talking to themselves.

Yet, strangest of all, when this man wasn't robbing—which meant when he was in the jug—he was a stem-winding preacher of the gospel. And even when he was on the loose, in between robberies he was not only preaching but helping the poor, handing out some of that money he took.

He believed in redistribution of the wealth, Bill Miner style. He never could convince the stagecoach people and railroad people that the idea was a good one. He finally died in prison because of that difference of opinion.

Strangest of all, perhaps, he never killed a man. He flat refused to kill a man. Time and again he was in some shooting. But he always aimed for the legs, or for the gun arm—and Bill Miner hit what he aimed at. He wouldn't let his men kill anybody, either.

This mysterious man, about whom so little is known today, remained true to that rule, "Never Kill a Man," right to the end—when it cost him his freedom.

Then Bill Miner pulled an even stranger one in the process of dying. He died of a gastric ulcer—probably the only highway robber in the history of the world to do so! Bankers, lawyers, newspapermen (and magazine editors—Ed.) die of gastric ulcers. Robbers don't.

Bill Miner did.

WHO was this Robin Hood of the Rods? He was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1843. In 1859 he was out in California, a squirt of sixteen, panning for gold. Nobody had bothered to tell him that all the good diggins had been dug and all the good pannin had been panned. So he dug and panned and got practically nothing for his work.

He was sitting by his campfire one night brooding over the way that wealth was distributed in the world. Mainly he was brooding over the fact that none of it was distributed his way. Suddenly, out of the night, came three tough-looking men, walking up to his campfire.

Before the toughs knew what was going on, they found themselves looking into the business end of Bill Miner's two cap-and-ball Colt .44 revolvers.

"You can put them away," the leader said. "We aim to be friendly."

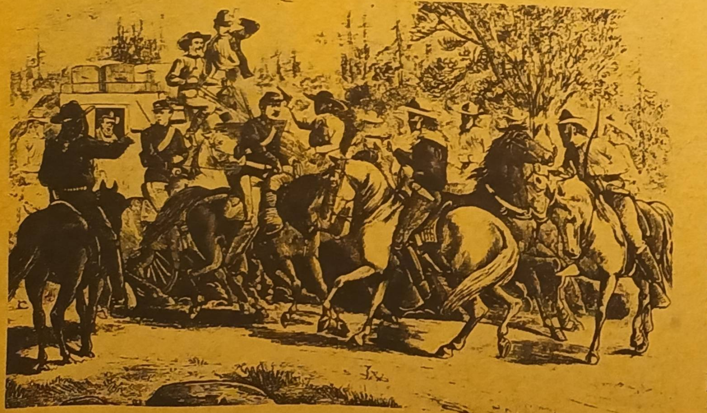
They had coffee. As they drank it, the strangers studied the youth. They saw that he was short on beans and long on patches. He was down and out and it showed. But could he handle a gun!

The leader of the gang loosened up and explained that he and his pals planned on doing a little panning for gold. It was a different kind of panning. They were going to work where they knew doggone well there was gold—on a stagecoach.

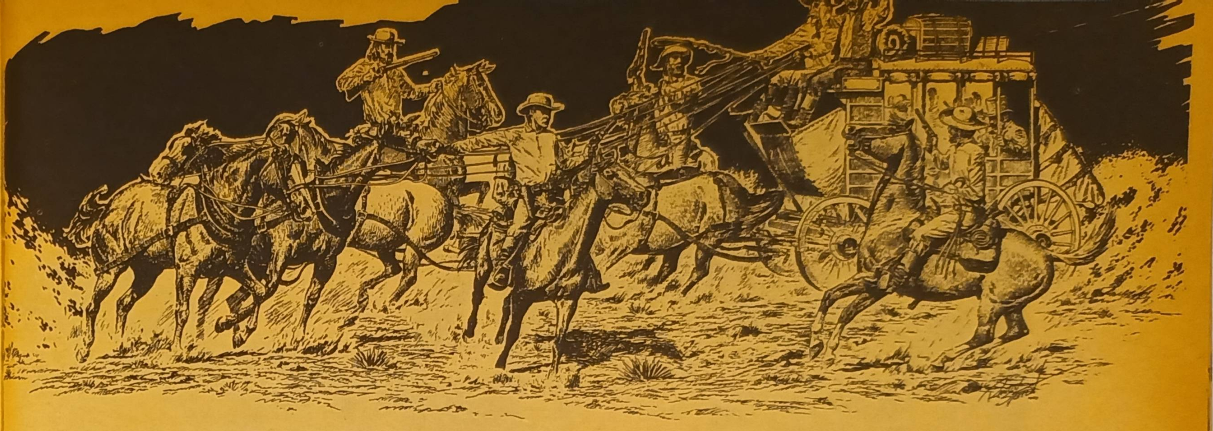
Did Bill Miner want to join them?

Bill Miner started out that day on the Owlhoot Trail. And his new boss couldn't find a thing wrong with the way Bill did his work when the four held up a stagecoach. The panning was right nice—$75,000 in gold.

Bill Miner could have gone to some other part of the country, settled down and lived out a big chunk of his life on his fourth of that haul. But the young man started out doing something that he kept right on doing until he died. He started giving part of his loot to the poor. It was a sincere, genuine urge in him.



An 1878 woodcut of a stagecoach robbery by masked highwaymen near Fort Fetterman, Wyoming—even though protected by military escort



He really believed the wealth ought to be redistributed, that everybody ought to have a little.

The law took a dim view of Bill Miner's way of redistributing the wealth. The chase became hotter as Bill and his three pals moved along, robbing stagecoaches whenever possible.

On the fourth try, luck ran sour on them. Bill Miner was caught by officers of the law—a lucky break in a way, since a posse would have strung him up—and shipped off to San Quentin penitentiary for a ten-year vacation.

THEN came to light another of the strange sides of the nature of this strange man. In prison Bill Miner's blue eyes, icy cold when he held his guns on a stagecoach driver, became mild and friendly. His voice softened, his manner became gentle. He started studying the Bible, and pretty soon he was preaching to the other inmates of the prison, telling them they ought to follow the path of virtue.

This "religious and gentlemanly young fellow," as the warden referred to him, made such an impression on the prison officials that they went to work to get him paroled. They thought he would spread the gospel of goodness on the outside, and thus reduce the work of the prison officials.

So, two years after Bill Miner walked into the prison, he was paroled. Two weeks later he teamed up with Bill LeRoy, a notorious outlaw. They robbed the Del Norte stagecoach, getting another big haul of gold. A posse was on their trail so quick the two men decided to separate, figuring only one had a chance to get away.

They were right. Only one did get away—Bill Miner. The posse caught Bill LeRoy and strung him up by the neck.

Miner decided it would be a good idea to change his ways, at least for a time. So he journeyed eastward until he came to the village of Onondaga, Michigan. There he settled down, posing as a man who had come by an honest fortune in the California gold fields.

Nobody questioned his story, and he lived a quiet life. He began working earnestly in many church activities. Also Bill took up his old hobby, giving to the poor, redistributing the wealth of the earth.

Bill Miner was a striking-looking fellow, tall and straight and strong, with mild blue eyes. Women liked him. He liked them. Finally, he proposed to one lovely young lady in the village and she accepted. The wedding date was set. It seemed that Bill Miner, ex-outlaw, was destined for a life of romance in the lilac-scented arbor of a Michigan village.

But there were strong, baffling urges that drove this man on to strange deeds. A short time before he was scheduled to lead his genteel lady to the altar, Bill Miner vanished, never to show up in that village again. A couple of months later he was back in Denver, teamed up with an outlaw named Stanton Jones.

THEY held up a stagecoach, got a big haul of gold, and headed for open spaces. The spaces were too doggone open, and soon a posse was so hot behind them that Miner and Jones decided to stop and shoot it out. They hid behind some rocks and opened up.

"Don't kill a man!" Bill Miner warned his outlaw partner.

That was a pitched battle, during which four or five men in the posse were wounded. They were all shot in the legs or arms—Bill never shot to kill, and his partners figured if they did, Bill might violate his code and turn on them.

The posse finally decided things were too hot, and pulled back for a breather. Miner and Jones slipped away, split their loot, and parted.

Miner lived quietly for some time, giving away a lot of his gold to poor people, working in the church, urging people to live the good life. He slipped away several times on small scale operations, but it wasn't until November, 1881, that he hit the big time again.

That's when he and a desperado named James Crum stopped the Sorona stage and relieved it of a heavy burden of gold.

By then a large chunk of the West was getting sick and tired of this preaching robber, even if he wouldn't kill a man. Dead or alive rewards were posted, citizens joined officers, and even a troop of U.S. Cavalry was ordered out to hunt down Bill Miner.

His friends among the poor sheltered him for a spell. But that was the kind of man-hunt nobody could escape for long. Bill Miner was caught, tried, and slapped back in San Quentin—that time for twenty-five years!

BILL started studying the Bible again, and preaching the good life to his fellow convicts. It worked once, maybe it would work again. But that time the prison officials seemed strangely unimpressed. It was all right for Bill Miner to preach—let him do it in the jug. They let him stay there until twenty years of his time ran out. Year followed year and decade followed decade, and in 1903, with a new century and virtually a new world in existence, Bill Miner stepped forth, a free man.

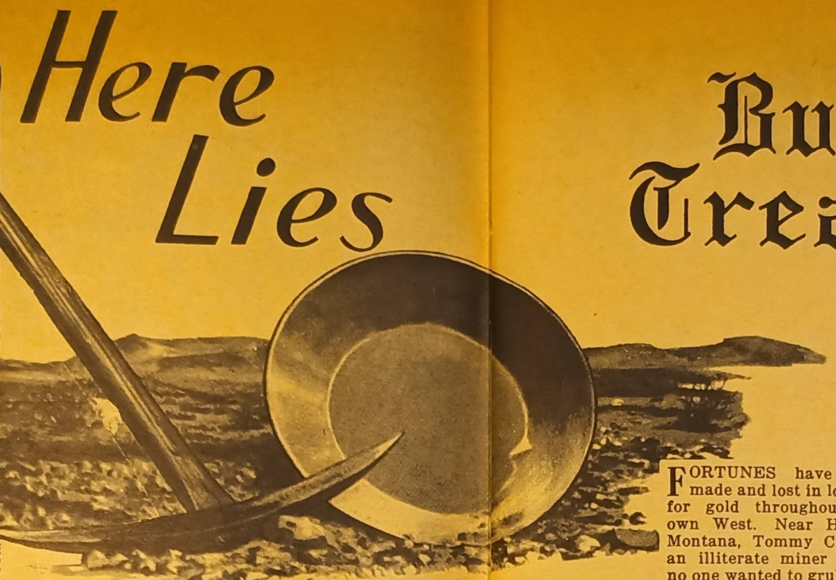
He was sixty years old then. While he had been in prison the stagecoach had just about vanished from the land, the automobile had come into being. It was the year of the first airplane flight. Dur-

(Continued on page 48)

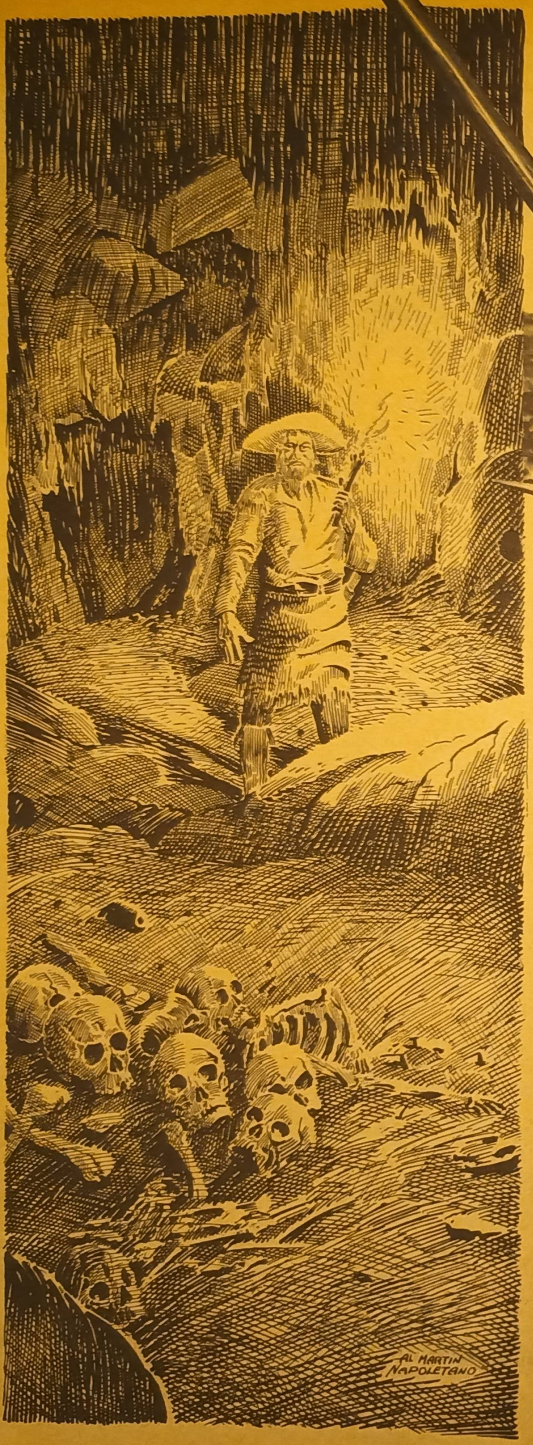
The last Deadwood Coach. Photo taken in 1890. Bill Miner's specialty was holding up these coaches—yet he would never kill a man, no matter how hard pressed.

Here Lies Buried Treasure!

By **TAMARA ANDREEVA**



Start talking about buried treasure around a campfire and I'll stay with you all night. This article tells where there's plenty of it—general vicinities, of course—and about the fighting and sudden death connected with trying to find it



THE story of gold is a saga of frantic search, brief rejoicing, bitter hates, tragic losses, aimless wanderings, and sudden death. Gold has always been an elusive commodity at best. The richest vein suddenly peters out; gold mines securely staked out become ghostly legends. Yet, it is the mystery of gold that sends men into every corner of the globe.

Queen Isabella told Columbus to keep his eye peeled for a gold mine. It was gold that kept such men as Kidd and Morgan hanging over the rail in storms that only the Atlantic could brew. When Cortez and his hordes came stomping through what now is Arizona, they were lured by tales of the Seven Cities of Cibola, where the very streets were paved with gold bricks. Instead they found sunbaked pueblos, and death from Indian arrows.

Throughout centuries, the lessons of gold were rough. Still it holds unmatched fascination. Many of its tales are worth retelling.

The British Admiralty and the U. S. Treasury Department have maps of hundreds of treasure ships dotting the ocean floor. Some have five to thirteen million aboard in specie, gold bars, or priceless jewels. Giant moray eels, octopi, quicksand, and treacherous currents guard them from intrepid salvors.

Off Punta l'Este, modern divers tried to get at the *Santa Paula*, a gold-bearing galleon with over three million under her rotting decks. Several society notables, among them Spreckels and Rockefeller, made a stab at the *Merida*, which foundered in 1911 off Cape Charles, Virginia, with Mexican Crown jewels aboard. Several syndicates have failed to salvage the diamonds and rubies that went down in the Bay of Natal with the *S. S. Grosvenor.* The most fascinating tale of undersea treasure concerns Port Royal—once a city of pirates and known to the seventeenth century chroniclers as the Pirates' Babylon. A tempest, earthquake and tidal wave joined forces to sink it into the ocean's depths. There it lies.

FORTUNES have been made and lost in looking for gold throughout our own West. Near Helena, Montana, Tommy Cruse—an illiterate miner whom no one wanted to grubstake—struck it so rich he was able to build himself a million dollar memorial—a cathedral of gothic traceries and spires, the exact replica of one in Cologne. Little has been heard lately of the once rich producers nearby—the Franklin, the Spring Hill, the Katie, the Bluebird. Only piles of old tailings whisper the story of loss and heartbreak.

No one will ever forget Bummer Dan, a voracious stumblebum who lived in Virginia City in the days of its spectacular 1864 gold strike. While everybody worked at getting rich, Dan frequented the saloons to steal the miners' beer. When the miners got fed up with him, they threw him out bodily, and ordered tersely: "Dig, or we'll string you up!" Dan dug. Suddenly he sat down. He was staring at a rock in his hand. It was a 16-ounce nugget. Bummer Dan was forgiven. The ledge where he made his strike is still remembered as Bummer Dan's ledge.

A rich silver mine lies hidden somewhere in the rugged hills near Tombstone, Arizona. Many have gone in quest of it; few have returned. Some died from thirst, others from the hands of unknown attackers. The vast hoard is still to be found.

Colossal Cave, near Tucson, keeps the secret of a bandit gang in its echoing corridors where vast treasure lies buried. Thus far no one has been bold enough to stick with the task and find the loot. Strange whispers raise the hair on the nape of your neck even in daytime when you go through the cave with an experienced guide.

In 1862, a Frenchman, Pierre Hauseberger, located a mine in Baja California that assayed $2200 to the ton. He had a standing offer of half a million for it. Oddly enough, he suddenly lost his memory and could not recall its location.

Early Spanish chroniclers speak of pirate gold buried in a cave near Ensenada, Baja California, where pirate ships used to unload their loot. This cave is closed most of the time by the rising waters of the pounding surf. The rotting coffers are still there. . . .

The Peralta brothers—Pedro, Ramon, and Manuel—came into what is now the Superstition mountains of Arizona, searching for Indian gold. They found it at the head of Salt river—untold quantities of precious yellow dust and nuggets. Overlooking their find was the needle-like peak they named La Sombrera. Two of the brothers decided to take what they could carry and return to Mexico to spend it, but Pedro was not satisfied. He marked the way—to be able to find his mines again—and went for reinforcements. He returned with sixty workers and over 150 mules. He soon found that his less greedy brothers were wise. Apaches attacked, drove out the party, and massacred most of it. In 1914, $18,000 worth of gold dust, scattered in this wild flight, was discovered by C. H. Silverlock.

Many people tried to find the early Spanish mines after that, but no one has. They are there all right, but they are so well camouflaged with caliche-cemented logs and so overgrown with wild bushes and grasses, a searcher wouldn't know it even if he stood directly over them. There aren't many seekers, for there seems to be a curse of death hanging over gold mines in the Superstitions.

IN the early sixties, three German prospectors—Jacobs, Waltz, and Wiser—went into the same mountains to search for the Peralta wealth. All three were greedy and trigger-happy. When they heard the sound of a miner's pick, they investigated and found two prospectors working not far from their camp. Waltz, the Dutchman, is supposed to have suggested getting rid of them, and they were mercilessly shot.

Then Waltz got to thinking about sharing the wealth with his two partners. When their backs were turned, he shot them. Jacobs died, but Wiser was able to drag himself to the Walker Ranch. He died there, but not before telling the story.

Ugly rumors started circulating about the Dutchman. He promptly took French leave. But he always returned to the Superstitions and his secret gold cave. He sometimes entered Phoenix with thousands in gold dust. Many people tried to follow him, but he always outfoxed them. Eventually, he retired. On February 22, 1891, the "Dutchman" died.

His secret died with him. Hundreds of adventurers tried to find his mine. All failed. Only one came close, and he paid with his life for his daring.

He was a retired businessman named Adolph Ruth. Ruth acquired a copy of the old Peralta treasure map. In 1931, when he embarked on his gold-digging expedition into the Superstitions, some unknown murderer had dogged his footsteps. Possibly it was someone well known to Ruth because, apparently, he did not expect the attack. A university professor on a geologic expedition found his bleaching bones and shattered skull by accident. The condition of the skull definitely pointed to murder. To this day Ruth's killer has not been found, nor has the Peralta Gold. . . .

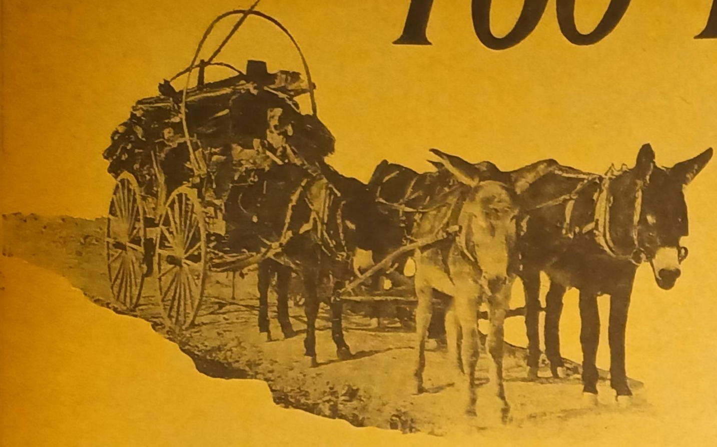
Another famous Arizona mine, discovered in 1890 by a man named Wagoner, has attracted quite a few gold adventurers. Wagoner was a tubercular who came to Arizona for his health. He dug for gold as a pastime, and discovered an extremely rich quartz ledge. The first person to learn about his find was a stage driver who always left and picked Wagoner up at the same spot in the desert near Pinal, Arizona. He always alighted with an empty suitcase—came back with a heavy one. One day he told the driver that he was rich and ready to retire. The same year Wagoner died. His gold is still the secret of the mountains—mute sentinels in the blazing Arizona sun. His mine is remembered as Wagoner's Lost Ledge.

With all this wealth still unclaimed, is there any wonder men get the bug, drop their families and flourishing businesses, to follow the will o' the wisp of gold luring them on?

TOO TOUGH TO DIE!

By BOB & JAN YOUNG

Chum, those mining towns were tough in the old days! Some of them just refused to die. . . .



Typical Pioche prospector. Picture taken about 1906, and included in rare mining prospectus (brochure) trying to sell stock in Pioche mines.

COLONEL Bill Bishop turned to help his beautiful bride from the stagecoach. She stepped down daintily, glanced into the cavernous gloom of the Pioche hotel.

As they paused, the sheriff, lounging nearby, spotted three "wanted" men. He called to the desperados while drawing his guns. The trio drew also, and Pioche re-echoed to gunfire. When the acrid smoke lifted, three desperados lay dead in the dusty wagon ruts. Mrs. Bishop, who'd taken refuge in the hotel, looked at the carnage, then at the calm, unconcerned faces about her. Resolutely, she signaled for her trappings to be replaced on the stage, and resumed her seat. She was heading back to Illinois. The new bride's stay in Pioche was estimated at something less than five minutes.

Mrs. Bishop was unusually quick to realize the fearful significance of the phrase, "I'm from Pioche!" even when Bodie, Tombstone, and Tuscarora were chipping niches in history with flying bullets. Piochers made no claim to fame, but modestly pointed to the 72 men laid out in Murderer's Row on Boot Hill—before the first man died a natural death. Thirty-one of the unmarked graves are still discernible in Pioche, a boom camp that came back, even though the law came late.

A Utah miner named Bill Hamblin opened Pandora's Box in 1863 when Piutes showed him where they had picked up chunks of rich silver ore. Hamblin staked a few claims, but no boom resulted until F. L. A. Pioche, a wealthy San Francisco importer, stepped in. With his money, mines were developed, mills built, and by 1869, Pioche began to rise like a meteor in the western skies.

PIOCHE, Nevada, 200 miles north of present day Las Vegas, became terminus for six stage lines, as well as the end of life for many men. Sons of Sudden Death were on hand in number, and their ranks swelled as Pioche mine owners imported 20-odd gun-slicks daily to fight off claim-jumpers, or to jump claims themselves,

John Ely and William Raymond, from Pahranagat (Watermelon) Valley, sealed a deal for the Burke claims with a $60 watch; $35,000 balance to be paid from profits. And they prospered from the first skip of ore—until the Newland brothers staked claims above one of their locations. The Newlands were given permission to drive a tunnel through some of the Raymond & Ely marginal claims. Underground only 30 feet, the Newlands struck $300-a-ton ore. Generously, Raymond & Ely leased the ledge for 30 days on a percentage. When the lease expired, the Newlands balked at giving up the half-uncovered fortune. They imported gunmen, built a fort around the shaft, and began shipping ore as fast as they could.

Neither the sheriff nor Raymond & Ely could dispossess the Newlands. Then Morgan Courtney & Company checked in.

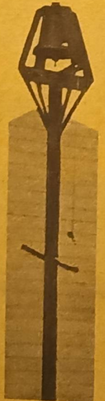
"We'll drive those fellows off, if you'll give us a written lease on the ledge for thirty days," Courtney offered. Mike Casey, Barney Flood, and Bill Bethers backed his boast.

The deal was closed, and the Courtney gang went to work. In a couple of days a case of fine whiskey was delivered to the Newland boys' fort, apparently by mistake. Now the Newland gunmen were all drier than covered bridges. They promptly launched a full scale jamboree. Courtney & Company hid in the hillside jackpine overlooking the entrenchment. When the jugs were emptied, Courtney's men swooped down.

Subsequent tallies list as many as 18 dead, and several more wounded. Courtney took the decision. Similar claim-jumping affairs in Pioche put 10 more men on Boot Hill.

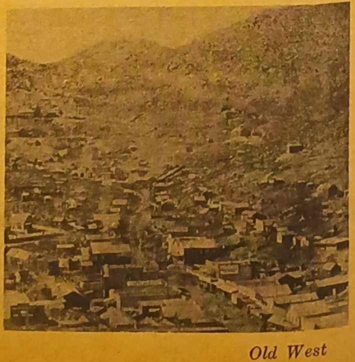
During the next 30 days, Courtney, Flood, Casey, and Bethers earned $15,000 apiece. For their efforts, Bethers was later shot down in Eureka; Flood was in a knife fight and eventually dangled from a noose. Courtney remained in Pioche until he shoved George McIntyre off the sidewalk. Then there was one.

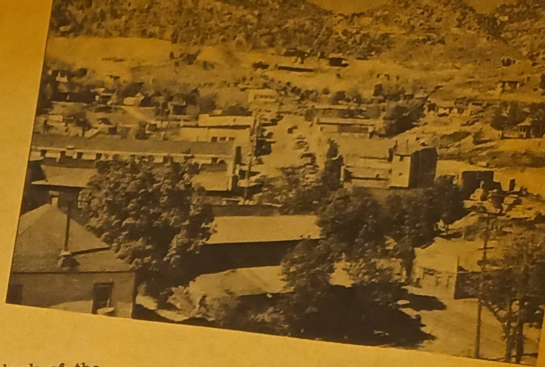
CASEY was making a bank deposit when Tom Gossan dunned him for a $100 debt. Casey okeyed the bank's payment, but Gossan was puckered because no interest was included. Inevitably, both men drew: Gossan missed; Casey didn't. But before he died, Gossan willed $5,000 to the man that would kill Casey.



Left: The "Million Dollar Courthouse" at Pioche, Nevada. Below: Ruins of Meadow Valley Mill at Dry Valley near Pioche. Mill has completely disappeared since this picture was taken in 1906. Right: During the raucous July 4th, 1873 celebration, the town bell was cracked from incessant ringing. This bell was cast to replace it. To insure a sweet tone, miners threw hundreds of silver dollars into the molten mass. It is still on main street and is used occasionally.

Check scene below with one in upper right-hand corner of page 33—they are the same—only this one was taken in 1875! Print courtesy Chas. Bleak.





Modern Pioche, looking towards Burke (Raymond & Ely) mine properties.

To Jim Levy, $5,000 was a lot of scratch. He provoked an argument with Casey. The men agreed that their next meeting would be a shoot-on-sight affair. Casey thoughtfully arranged with a partner for an ambush; but Jim Levy came up the alley behind the men, wounding the partner and killing Casey.

Levy now set about to see how much busthead $5,000 would buy, while keeping his back to the wall to avoid Casey's friends. Tiring of the excitement, with his pockets as empty as a wrestler's mind, Levy left Pioche and was shot to death in Arizona.

Despite the blood-letting, the gruesome practice of laying bets to see who would survive the day, or shooting a citizen just to win a bet on which way he would fall, Pioche bulged with its 10,000 residents. Seventy-two saloons dispensed popskull, while 32 *maisons de joie*, and 3 hurdy-gurdies (two white and one variegated) took their usual place. The bustling town boasted three rail spurs and two daily newspapers. Pioche had to have the best. A smelter was constructed with bricks imported from Scotland. Each brick cost about a dollar. Tourists undoubtedly sensed their value since not a stone remains today.

Pioche's first disaster occurred in 1871 when fire spiraled up from a Main Street restaurant. The volunteer fire company was helpless against flames that roared through the wooden buildings. Hope soared as the fire approached the stone-fireproofed Felsenthal store. Men and women slipped down slopes back of the city, believing the fire was controlled. Another alarm warned them back. Felsenthal's store contained 300 barrels of blasting powder!

The warning was too late. A mushroom of orange-black flame swirled skyward with an explosion that shook the scoop-shaped valley. Timbers, stone, and bodies catapulted 500 feet into the air, and debris sprinkled the precipitous slopes. Though 13 were killed and 47 injured, Pioche began rebuilding before the last spark was dampened. Uncontrollable fires swept Pioche several times afterwards, until the lime-choked pipes were replaced, and the city protected by the present award-winning volunteer fire company.

WITH Pioche slated to ring up forty millions in silver, robbing of Wells-Fargo stages became an organized industry. Poor old "Baldy" Green, a select whip, was held up so often he was finally sacked on the theory that Baldy either had exceptionally bad luck, or there was some question where his fidelity lay.

Nicanor Rodriguez and Jack Harris were two that beat the system—for awhile. Nick, "The Spanish King," operated openly in the Pioche area, yet he was often host at sumptuous game dinners for officers in Hamilton's restaurant. Nick's efficiency was taken for granted, and eventually he demanded tribute from mill owners for not robbing their stages. Even Wells-Fargo complied, paying him $2,000 a month to leave their coaches alone. Nick eventually fussed with the Pioche manager, and the deal was off. He was arrested shortly thereafter, but escaped, and lived grandly in Mexico for the rest of his life.

A smaller operator, Jack Harris, knew the Pioche area as few others. He would pop up so unexpectedly there was seldom time for gunfire. Jack continued to tap the Wells-Fargo boxes regularly. The Pioche manager suggested that Wells-Fargo hire Harris for $200 a month, provided he would meet the stages, at the station. Reluctantly, Jack agreed. For a time no robberies occurred. In a few weeks, however, looting resumed on the previous scale. The local manager finally figured the dodge. Jack, hours before the stage was due in Pioche, would gallop to a narrow canyon, rob the stage, then race back by a secret shortcut. He'd be on the porch to meet the stage when it came in!

Jack drew his time. and disappeared from Pioche.

PERHAPS the more lasting Pioche monument is the old Courthouse (still standing) which was condemned in 1933—three years before it was paid for!

A year after the post office was established, the county seat was moved from Hamilton to Pioche. With button-busting pride a courthouse and jail were planned. Bids were advertised, and contracts let for a $16,000 courthouse and a jail to cost $10,000. The county treasury bulged from bullion tax, licenses, and property tax

(Continued on page 42)

Below: Depot at Pioche, reached by the Salt Lake Route on a spur from Caliente. Other photo is of "Murderer's Row"—The Pioche cemetery. Center: The "$60 Mine" (cabin with smokestack). Also, scene of Courtney fight. Right top: Tailing dumps at Bullionville. Ruins of old mill in background. This mill extracted most of the $30 millions taken from the Raymond & Ely claims. Right, bottom: An ore-carrying tram thunders across Boothill in Pioche. The small stone furnace in the foreground was used by Chinese as crematorium. Stack of smelter is in background.

Jim Bridger
King of Mountain Men

(Continued from page 20)

who might be unlucky enough to be cornered by his troops.

Jim didn't like that order, but was haughtily ignored by Connor when he suggested modifying it. The scout didn't press the matter. He knew where he rated with the fire-breathing General right from the start. This was the orneriest CO he'd ever drawn, and they'd all be damned lucky to get back to Fort Laramie wearin' their *sculps!*

Events proved Bridger an excellent prophet.

Irritation piled upon irritation for Jim in that fantastic Powder River campaign. From the first hour of march nobody paid the slightest attention to the Chief of Scouts; even shavetail lieutenants, new to the Plains, took their cue from the General and regarded the old frontiersman as a quaint buckskin-clad relic of an outmoded past. Within clear sight of the Big Horns—where keen-eyed hostile scouts were sure to be posted—Connor's rattle-brained volunteers set the prairie ablaze by carelessly letting a cookfire get out of control. Huge clouds of smoke poured up into the crystalline atmosphere, advertising the presence of white men to every Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapahoe warrior for fifty miles around. Bridger protested to the General. Conner replied loftily that the more hostiles were attracted by the billowing smoke, the more there'd be for him to destroy!

"Wal, I'll be doggoned—it does hold ten gallons!"

Jim gave up then in disgust and kept silent. *Wagh,* he reflected bitterly, watching enemy smoke signals rising ominously from the distant buttes, *thar's no bigger fool in all creation than the fool who thinks he knows everythin'!*

The troops reached Tongue River in the heart of the Indian country late in August. Reconnoitering Pawnee scouts quickly located a big village of hostiles camped one sleep away. Connor decided to leave his ninety wagons in corral on the Tongue, and attack immediately.

FOLLOWING Bridger's advice for once, the eager General massed his entire force in the hills above the enemy camp before ordering the charge. The hostiles—a large band of Arapahoes under Chief Black Bear—were surprised and routed almost before they knew what had hit them. Connor's mounted troopers chased the fleeing Indians ten miles with the General roaring along in the lead, blasting away with his fancy ivory-handled Colt and enjoying himself immensely. Outrunning the main body of his command, Connor and a handful of his men found themselves attacked in turn by the quarry they had been chasing. Back they galloped, arrows buzzing like hornets around their ears, to where Bridger was coolly directing his fellow scouts in the methodical destruction of the Arapahoe camp.

Long rifles of the frontiersmen held off the raging Arapahoes until Connor, bellowing like a wounded buffalo bull, reformed his disorganized volunteers.

After destruction of the village was complete, the hard-pressed troops lit out on the double for their wagon corral on Tongue River. Connor's rear guard and flankers fought a vicious running engagement until dark, when the Indians turned back toward their burned camp.

Back at Fort Laramie with "sculps" intact after a hurried and harried retreat from Tongue River, Jim and General Connor drew a discharge and an official reprimand respectively. Connor was relieved of his command, but no hint of censure was directed at the 61-year-old scout.

Jim returned to his Missouri farm for a brief rest, but was back in the service again in May of 1866 with Colonel Henry Carrington's command.

BRIDGER found the Indian situation fouled up worse than ever. Fumbling "peace commissioners" from Washington were trying desperately to pacify the hostiles with gifts and vague promises while the military bulled ahead on its own initiative. Typical of Army operations at this critical period was Colonel Carrington's foolhardy mission to open a wagon road around the Big Horn Mountains to Montana, and to construct military posts to guard this road from Indian attack.

For weird reasons known only to the big brass, the Bozeman Trail was selected for this wagon road in preference to the Bridger Trail laid out by Jim himself in '64. Bozeman's Trail, lying *east* of the Big Horns, ran straight through the Sioux hunting grounds. Any troop movements or post-building along *that* road was bound to stir up real trouble with the Indians. Bridger's road, lying *west* of the guardian mountains, was well outside Sioux territory and shorter to boot. All this being incontestably true, it was of course inevitable that the Army chose the hard way in accordance with its immemorial custom.

There was another disconcerting matter conveniently ignored by the High Command—the embarrassing fact that Carrington's orders were in direct violation of the terms of the Harney-Sanborn Treaty signed by the Sioux leaders only the year before. Bridger gloomily predicted that Red Cloud and Crazy Horse would never stand for such a royal double-crossing without putting up a fight. "Dunno ez I blame 'em much, either!" commented honest old Jim bluntly.

Bridger was stationed with Colonel Carrington's outfit at Fort Phil Kearney on that bleak December 21st, 1866, when Red Cloud and Crazy Horse ringed the new Fort on the Piney with warpainted braves. Jim shook his grizzled head when the rash Captain—breveted Lieutenant-Colonel—William Fetterman led out a detail to bring in the woodchoppers' train from the hills west of the Fort. Eighty-one men, most of them armed with old style muzzle-loading muskets, exposing themselves to 2,000 Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Sioux! Plain murder—and not a durned thing he could do to prevent it. If only these reckless young Civil War officers could be taught how to fight Injuns. . . .

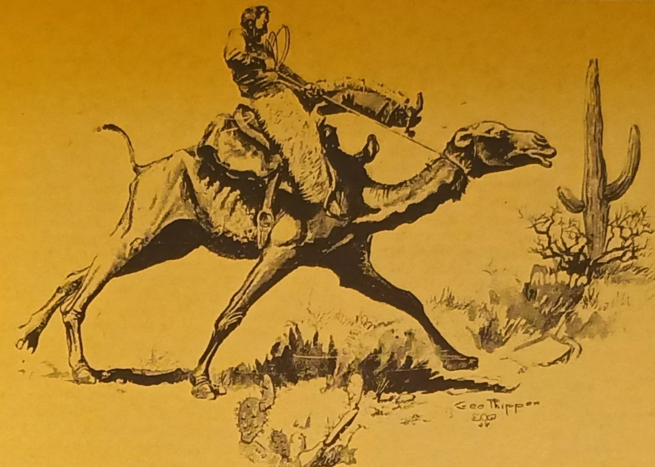
Jim's grim fears were quickly realized. Fetterman—blindly chasing Crazy Horse and a small group of decoys instead of obeying his exact and explicit orders to rescue the wood train and escort it back to the Fort—blundered smack into the ambushing horde of warriors and died valiantly but senselessly, along with every man in his command.

BRIDGER never forgot the horrible sight of the stripped, mutilated bodies of victims being carried into the Fort in relief column wagons after the brief "battle." What hit the tough old Mountain Man hardest was the pitiful spectacle of Lieutenant Grummond's young wife moving dazedly forward on the Colonel's supporting arm to pick out the body of her husband from among the scores of staring, frozen corpses.

Bad medicine this— and the awful responsibility rested squarely on the heedless shoulders of the treaty-breaking white man, not upon the outraged tribesmen. Jim was saddened by it all. For the first time in his life he felt old and out of place.

"Red Cloud's War" ended in August, 1868, in complete if temporary victory for the Sioux. Jim Bridger marched with the soldiers out of Fort Phil Kearney—and Red Cloud's warriors came whooping down from the mountains to fire the newly constructed post. Everything inflammable was burned to the ground—Fort, stockade, cabins and corrals. Not a vestige of a *Wasichu* habitation was left standing when the triumphant braves

(Continued on page 36)



Cowboy Rides A Camel

By **HERB WOOD**

Illustrated by Geo. Phippen

If you don't like this story, then either you or us sure 'nuff got a warped sense of humor!

SMOKEY and I have just finished moving to our winter camp in the Hackawa Mountains, which border on the edge of the Big Sandy River and the badlands. We've just got through the fall work at the home ranch, the X-X. Our work at the winter camp is to ride the rough country, branding calves missed during the summer.

We've just got started good, when in staggers a bird we think is old Rip Van in person. About all he has for clothes is a collar and a belt. He looks a stranger to soap and water. He has plenty of sandburs in his whiskers, but we manage to fill him up on beans and black coffee. Getting his second wind, he takes a man's size chew of tobacco and winds up so we can't get a word in edgeways.

Says he is Bitter Creek Bill. He's been hunting a lost placer diggings in the heart of the badlands, where he's been for six months. He looks the part. There ain't any living-water in there for fifty miles and we tell him so, but he informs us that there are two small springs that last the year 'round; that there are mountain sheep, a few wild cattle, and the biggest camel that ever wore hair in these badlands.

I walk over to my bed and sit down. I have an old forty-five under my pillow. That bozo looks spooky to me. Smokey looks him over, builds a smoke, and begins to ask questions. I edge in and cross question, and pretty soon we both believe the camel is there. Old Bitter Creek is spilling the truth, we know, for there had been a few camels turned loose on the Yuma Desert a few years back. We figure this old nester had drifted north into the badlands.

My lifelong ambition has been to ride a camel. Smokey or I had never seen one, only their pictures.

Bitter Creek sketches us a map of the badlands. We figure when we have time we'll go there and look things over. We bed down for the night, but I can't sleep. I'm scheming how to snare that camel. I can hear Smokey keep turning over and I think he is chasing camels, too. Old Bitter Creek just saws wood, never missing a knot.

Next morning we have breakfast by daylight. I tell Smokey I have the camel fever, and believe I'll go look see. He says he is rarin' to go with me, so we saddle up our two best horses and pack old Croppy, a little Mexican mule. He's got half an ear gone. I guess some Mexican had chewed it off in his younger days. We tell Bitter Creek to make himself at home till he's rested up.

According to our map we have about thirty miles to Bitter Creek's camp and we high-tail it right along. We find a small seep with just enough water for camp use and our horses. We scout around and find Bitter Creek's camp. He hasn't lied. It is getting late so we make camp. It is a wild and chopped-up country—canyons and sand dunes as far as you can see. There are a few stunted mesquites and plenty of cactus but no sign of stock. Doesn't look too good, but we don't let on, just swap a few lies and turn in.

NEXT morning we beat the little birdies up and head for the spring ten miles farther on. We leave our camp outfit and tie Croppy up.

We step right along and find a small spring that runs out on the bed of rock and forms a tank of nice clear water. There are a few tracks in the trails but nothing big enough for a camel's track, though we don't know whether he has a split hoof or hoofs like a horse.

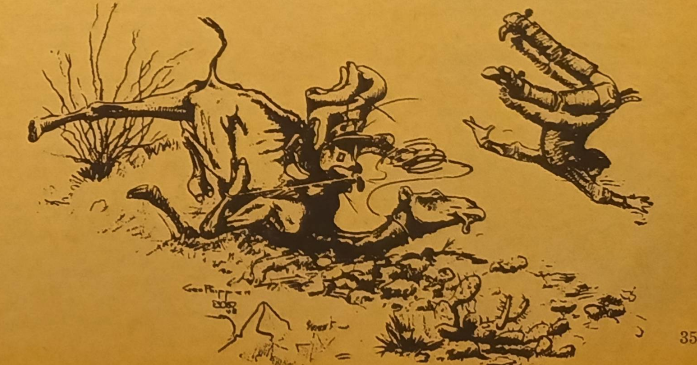
There are so many ridges and canyons it is a toss-up which way to go, so we start cutting sign but don't go far till we jump two old moss-backed steers, wild as bucks. Right there my ears lop down. Bitter Creek has seen some Mexican steer that has been crossed up with the Brahman and looks like a camel. Smokey says camels don't have horns. Them old outlaws have plenty.

We track and ride sand washes and slide down sand dunes for two days. We are ready to go back and trim Bitter Creek when we ride around a sand point, and there stands Mr. Camel! He's the toughest looking hombre that ever popped a man's eyeballs!

I look at Smokey. He's taking down his seagrass. I follow suit. That old long-haired baby has started moving out, but he looks thirty feet high and twice as long. Our horses are afraid of him, so he gets a good start. He is shambling right away from us on the straight-aways, but there are so many crooked turns we soon have him hoodooed. Smokey hangs a loop around his neck, which looks like a fence rail. He drags Smokey's pony right along like nobody's business when I come in and snare his hind toes and we stretch him out. We get him hogtied. Then the big fight starts to put a hackamore on him.

His long suit is to bite, and his neck is long enough to reach you in any direction. He is so old he is almost white. Must have been hatched in the year One, but all his teeth are there and plenty long. He gets ahold of Smokey's boot heel and hangs on till I lower the boom on him between the eyes with a doubled rope, and Smokey is telling him if he thinks he can wear his boots he has another think coming. We get him tied up the way we want him and let him up. We are like two little kids with our first pair of red top boots. We own a camel!

(Continued on page 40)



A Ghost Named Jones

(Continued from page 25)

Indian by the name of Avotte, learned that a couple of Nelson teamsters were making a play for his squaw. Avotte murdered them both and topped it off by slaying four completely innocent persons. His own uncle hunted him out in the desert, killed and buried him, and brought back his deformed hand as proof.

Several years later the same district spawned Quejo, a half-breed who killed twenty men, women and children. For a half dozen years, Quejo led the lawmen of southern Nevada and northern Arizona on a wild chase through canyons flanking the Colorado. At times the officers came close enough to their quarry to find the embers of Quejo's campfires still hot. But Quejo was never apprehended.

Years later, in 1935, his mummified remains were found in a cave high above the river. He had apparently perished while pursuit was at its height.

Other misfortunes—chiefly financial—struck the district, and with eventual failure of her mines, the canyon was at last virtually abandoned.

In the bare, rocky ranges immediately south of Hoover Dam, the one-time boom camps of Nelson and Eldorado huddle silently in a desert sun that ofttimes soars to 130 degrees. Once-imposing buildings have long since fallen to tumbled ruins, once-busy streets have been largely reclaimed by creosote and cacti, and formerly-productive mines stand eerie and quiet.

It has been a long, long while since anyone has reported glimpsing the ghost named Jones. But if the phantom half-breed still prowls the vicinity, he must feel thoroughly at home.

Eldorado canyon is a perfect hide-out for ghosts . . .

Jim Bridger King of Mountain Men

(Continued from page 34)

completed their vengeful work of destruction.

Abandonment of Fort Smith on the Big Horn River and Fort Reno at the head of the Powder followed in early autumn. Again Red Cloud's exulting warriors put the torch to the hated white man's forts and danced the Victory Dance around the leaping flames. Even the stern, silent Crazy Horse joined in the wild festivities celebrating the end of Army occupation of the Sioux hunting grounds.

On November 6, 1868, Red Cloud himself rode grandly into Fort Laramie to sign a brand-new treaty with the jittery representatives of the Great White Father in Washington. By touching the pen used at the council, the Chief officially ended the only war ever lost by the U. S. Army.

IN 1870, Jim Bridger's health began to fail and he was discharged from the Army for the last time. For some months after his discharge the old scout clung to his beloved mountains, but early in 1871 Jim's illness became so pronounced he was forced to leave the West and go home to Missouri—to "git ready for that last long trip to the Spirit Land," as he dourly expressed it.

The "last long trip" was painfully slow in coming for Jim. The goiter he had contracted years before from drinking iodine-deficient mountain water troubled him greatly; his "rheumatiz" and an old neglected hernia combined to virtually cripple him. Worst of all, Jim's once phenomenally keen eyesight gradually dimmed until by 1875 he was totally blind.

Losing his eyesight was a crushing blow to the aged Mountain Man. Always restless, he was now doubly so. Accustomed as he was to high, wide skies and far-flung horizons, Jim found blindness almost unendurable. Most of all, he missed watching the sun rise and set each day. Storms depressed him because he couldn't "git to see 'em rollin' up across the sky." His hearing seemed to sharpen, as if in compensation for his blindness. He loved to listen to the wind rustling the ripened wheat, and the dissonant wild clangor of gray geese flying overhead in the night set the caged hunter trembling like a leashed hound.

"Stick 'em up!"

On days when the weather was pleasant, Jim's faithful daughter, Virginia, would saddle his placid old horse for him and start the pair off on a meandering tour of the fields, escorted by the farm dog, Sultan. Sometimes the horse would wander off into the woods and get lost. Then Sultan would trot home alone, and Virginia would leave her housework to rescue her father.

"Hard doin's" for old Jim, no doubt about that. Sorely he missed the good companions of his youth, the lusty comrades of years long gone. Kit Carson and most of the old Mountain Men were dead. The few remaining *hivernants* were holed up like himself, impatiently waiting for Death to release them to prowl new country beyond the horizon. But Death was maddeningly slow in coming for Jim.

Kindly neighbors dropped in on the lonely old man now and then, and Jim would lay aside his long pipe and spin again his oft-told yarns of a picturesque life as foreign to these placid Missouri farmers as life on the moon—Rendezvous on the Green River, the "place whar Hell bubbled up" in Yellowstone Park, his "follerin' o' the North Star" to the very rim of the Artic Ocean. Invariably Jim wound up his yarns with the firm declaration: "Ef I waren't sick and blind, I'd still be out thar—a-prowlin' the fur peaks and hidden valleys, same as allus!"

AS the slow gray years dragged on and he still lived, Jim reverted in his dazed and troubled mind more and more to his happy early years among the Crows and Shoshones. On the pain-racked nights when he couldn't sleep he sat hunched before the fireplace, his old Hawken rifle cradled in his arms, softly singing the Crow Song of Good Hunting while his gnarled fingers tapped out the barbaric rhythm on the rifle stock.

One breathlessly hot evening in July of 1881, Virginia came home from a neighborhood errand to find her father standing in the open kitchen doorway with his sightless eyes turned toward the glowing West. Somehow the enfeebled old man had dragged himself from his bed to the doorway, and now he was trembling violently and clinging to the door-frame to hold himself erect.

Virginia rushed to him in quick alarm: "Father, what's the matter—what is it?"

He turned to her, smiling, and spoke with surprising vigor in the stately Shoshone tongue: "Do not be frightened, my daughter. The Mighty One Above has called me—I go soon to his faraway Spirit Land beyond the sunset. I am ready!"

Within the week Jim Bridger was dead.

Left-Handed Rifle

Dear Mr. Gipson:

I was very much interested in that photo reproduction of Jim Bridger's rifle on page 8 of No. 1. Did you ever hear of a left-handed rifle? No, I don't mean a left-handed monkey wrench. I mean a rifle, and I'm not trying to be funny. That rifle of Bridger's is for a left-handed man; that is, the lock is on the left side of the gun. Of course, most of the old muzzle-loaders were made for right-handed men with the lock on the right side. A gunsmith made each gun for his customer, and when a left-handed man came along, the lock was put on the left side.

In the days of the flintlock, a shooter would run the risk of getting his eyes or face burned by the powder flash if he was left-handed and fired a right-handed gun. When percussion caps came in, the same thing applied, for the nipples had a habit sometimes of blowing off. If the shooter was left-handed and fired a right-handed gun, he would run chances of getting that nipple and powder flash right in his face.

The story states that Bridger had that rifle when he discovered Great Salt Lake. In that case, it was originally a flintlock, because at that date, the percussion cap had not come into use. In fact, it did not come into use for a number of years after that discovery. Flintlocks were later remodeled into percussion caps by changing the lock and inserting the tube into the barrel, with the nipple attached.

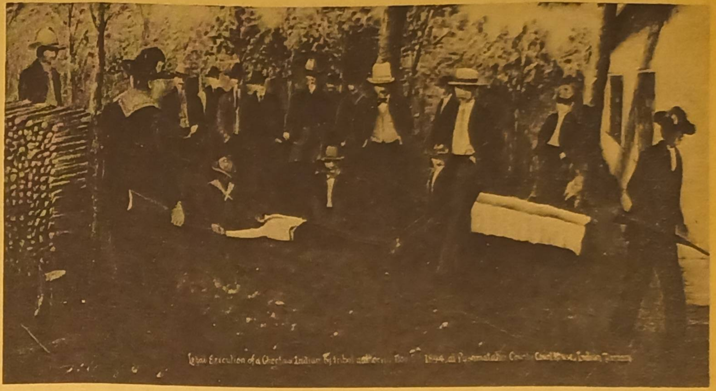
I have read much about Bridger, but I never saw any mention, that I recall, that he was left-handed. In fact, I never gave it a thought; but this gun definitely proves that he was left-handed.—Earle R. Forrest, 205 North Main Street, Washington, Penn.

Well, Earl, that's one on us, too. You reckon some fool engraver could have flopped the negative?

Honor so strong a man waits to be shot when freedom meant merely walking into the wilderness? That was honor back in 1894-Indian style, that is . . .

CHOCTAW EXECUTION

By JAMES R. GRAY



This is a painting that Frank Raymond made of the execution scene and is authentic down to the smallest detail, we understand. It was drawn from the original photo which was too damaged for reproduction.

WE called them uncivilized savages. Yet what higher mark of civilization is there when a man's word of honor is as good as life itself?

You found that among the Choctaw Indians, member of the five civilized nations of Indians, back when the dwindling remnants of the once great tribe lived in a world of their own.

And it is doubtful if there was ever a more graphic demonstration of that word of honor than the story of Silan Lewis—the story of the way he met death.

I heard about it from Frank Raymond, a white man who knew Lewis, and who witnessed his death back in 1894. Raymond did more than witness it—he took a photograph of the scene soon afterward.

So from here on, it's Frank Raymond's story—just as he told it to me.

I was twenty-one when I moved to Hartshorne, a part of the Choctaw Nation. That whole country, later to become a part of Oklahoma of course, was known in those days as "Indian Territory." I was apprentice to a photographer named Doughten. We set up for business in a tent in the center of the little frontier coal-mining town.

One day, in the fall of 1894, a Choctaw Indian of about forty, and his wife—who was much younger and only part Indian—came into the studio. The man could talk very little English. The woman told me they wanted their picture taken, together.

"He is Silan Lewis," she said. "He doesn't have long to live."

I took a picture of the couple. After they were gone, I began to find out about Silan Lewis. It was hard for me to believe part of what I heard.

At that time the Choctaws had their own government—made their own laws and enforced them. Silan Lewis had been tried before a court of his own people and sentenced to death for the murder of another Choctaw named Joe Hoklotubbe. The killing took place because of a political fight. Lewis belonged to the Nationalists, Hoklotubbe to the Progressives. Members of the two parties had gotten into such a row that some of the nationalists went to Hoklotubbe's home one night and killed him.

Lewis was accused of being one of the killers. He was tried and sentenced. Then he was turned loose—free to go where he pleased until the day of execution. That was the part that was hard to believe. But Indians, living by their own codes, had a highly developed sense of honor. Lewis could be trusted to show up for his execution at the proper time, I was told.

I wanted a picture of the execution. So, on November 4, 1894, the day before the event, I got on a train and rode from Hartshorne to Red Oak. I stayed there that night, then hired a horse the next day and rode out to Brown's Prairie, the site of the execution. That is in the Kiamichi Mountain region of Southeastern Oklahoma, well known for its hunting and its scenery.

A man named John Elliott was my chance companion on the trip. We arrived before 10 a.m. and found a busy scene. The courthouse was a small box affair, about 24 by 36 feet. It had once been painted white, but it had faded to a dull gray. Beyond the courthouse was a creek. Smoke was rising from campfires along its banks. Horses and mules, buggies and wagons, were scattered over the landscape. People milled about the courthouse.

There were quite a few white people, but most of the crowd were Indians, forty of whom were carrying Winchesters. Those forty kept moving around in the crowd. They were Indian policemen, I found out.

Elliott and I dismounted and tied our horses. I set out with my photographic equipment and tried to get information about the execution. I didn't have much luck. Most of the Choctaws just grunted when I asked questions. When I made them understand about taking pictures, they shook their heads and began to get angry.

It was cold. Someone had built a big fire of logs. I got close to it and waited. The waiting seemed to go on and on. The Indians never seemed to notice this delay nor the cold. They just stood or sat, saying nothing, showing no excitement.

A few did come and gawk at my camera. It was a big box affair on a tripod. I was using 7 by 9 glass plates. I was afraid some of the Choctaws might damage my equipment, but they were content to just look.

No matter how quiet those Indians seemed, the tension was building up. Finally, a white man drifted up to the fire and told us that the judge was repeating the sentence. "Indian custom," the man said.

"I hear there's going to be trouble," another man remarked.

JUST about then an Indian came in riding fast from the north. His arrival created excitement and a flurry of talk in Choctaw. The armed policemen lined up on the north side of the courthouse. Some of them knelt, as though they were getting ready to shoot.

Elliott told me what the rider said then. Friends of the condemned man were demanding his release. So I picked up my camera and moved to the top of a small hill. Here the view was fine and I figured I wouldn't be in the line of fire if shooting started. I focused on the scene below and started waiting some more.

The excitement quieted down. Finally, I left the camera and joined the court-

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Frank Raymond, the man who witnessed the execution.

Outlaws of The Brush

(Continued from page 23)

soon as she was let out, she took him back to the "tall timbers."

He had a name now—Table Cloth, from his checkered blue, yellow and white color. The next year he was not in the roundup. He still ranged alone with his mother. The pair were seen occasionally, but by fleetness and constant alertness, and by taking cunning advantage of cedar-studded roughs, they escaped roundup after roundup until the cow was no longer seen. In the prime of life now, Table Cloth kept in fine condition and kept his figure too. He often led younger steers into wilderness, but they could be cut off and rounded in while he vanished.

When he was ten years old, three punchers with special orders to get Table Cloth sighted him farther off from the canyon cedars than they had ever seen him before. They hazed him, along with his little bunch, into a herd being trimmed for the market.

Table Cloth became one among two thousand grown steers bound for the shipping pens. He walked up with the leaders. The first night on the trail, watchful guards saw that he remained standing while the other cattle bedded down. While the Dipper swung around the North Star and one relief after the other circled the cattle, he roamed about, horning sleepers out of his way in a most domineering manner, until the Morning Star began to pale. Perhaps he was accustomed to little sleep. He was full of the pride and energy of life.

About the middle of the next night, storm clouds blew up and the herd arose on restless feet. All hands were called out. They prevented a break or a drift, but when daylight came, Table Cloth was gone. Tracks showed that he had left in a lope. The herd had to go on.

TWO years later, organized riders made a special hunt. One man sighted Table Cloth, fired his six-shooter as a signal, and fell in behind him up an open arroyo. The hoofs of both steer and horse were making a fine clatter, and maybe the puncher was gaining a little, when he saw an enormous bear raise up on his hindlegs just ahead of Table Cloth to investigate. Table Cloth never swerved an inch. He hit the bear, bowled him over, and tore on. He had to cross some open ground, and here two punchers "twined" him about the same time. They snubbed him to a tree until the lead ox could be brought.

Table Cloth tried his best to gore the yokemate, but he was necked up too close for horn action. After getting to the beef herd, he was kept necked. At night he made life miserable for the gentle ox, constantly shifting round, looking for escape. Escape was never for a minute out of his mind. But he was on his way to a packing plant, and the boss had promised treats to the whole outfit if they could shut the gates behind the outlaw in the shipping pens.

They had traveled two or three days and Table Cloth was still secure and was actually lying down like the other cattle, apparently asleep, when in the quietness of night a coyote let out a sudden, piercing yell at the edge of the herd. Instantly the cattle were pounding the ground. Riding to circle the frightened stock, a puncher heard a steer moaning as if in great agony. He paused and saw Table Cloth standing on one side of a tree and the lead ox down on the other, choking to death. He had no time for anything but to cut the necking rope from the gentle animal's throat. Table Cloth was long gone before the ox could get to his feet. The stampede was not serious, and once more the cattle train pulled away from the shipping pens—without Table Cloth.

Three years went by. He was still free. He had ridded himself of the necking rope and looked to be in the prime of condition. After returning from marketing the last fall shipment, the boss proposed that certain men take their Winchesters and bring in Table Cloth's hide and carcass. He thought he was offering an opportunity for big sport. He was surprised at the opposition that rolled up.

Hadn't Table Cloth fairly won life and liberty? For fifteen years now the whole Shoe Sole outfit had been after him—and he was still free. He was getting old. He had never really tried to kill a man. He had simply outplayed his opponents. He could not be called mean. Among his kind he was rarer than a cowman out of debt, as outstanding as Bugger Red among riders of pitching horses. By God, he deserved to live among the cedars and canyons he loved so well—and the boss agreed. Table Cloth continued to enjoy his liberty for several years. Then, like his mother, he was no longer seen. No man ever came across his skull.

"It drives pursuing posses crazy!"

Choctaw Execution

(Continued from page 37)

house crowd again.

"They're going ahead with the execution," my new friend Elliott said. I started to go get my camera but hesitated when some Indians came out of the brush southwest of the courthouse. They were carrying a coffin. I watched them set it down near the courthouse. Then two of the Indian policemen went off toward the creek.

These Choctaws didn't wrap themselves in blankets, the way some of the tribes further west did. They liked loud colors and big hats, but they dressed about like the white people.

The two policemen came back from the creek. Between them was the condemned man. All that time Silan Lewis had been there by the creek with his family. Any time he had wanted to, he could have ridden away.

I looked closely at the Indian when they brought him to the courthouse. This was the first time I'd seen him since that day in Hartshorne when I'd made the photograph. He looked about the same—perhaps a trifle thinner, but his features showed no sign of worry or fear.

LEWIS was led to a spot about thirty feet from the courthouse on the north side. The empty coffin waited only a few feet away. He wore a blue serge suit. He pulled off the coat and vest, exposing a white shirt.

A blanket was thrown on the ground, and Lewis was forced to sit on it, facing the courthouse. Someone removed his shoes. His feet were stretched out straight in front of his body. He sat very erect.

A Choctaw official came up behind Lewis and unbuttoned his shirt, baring his chest. The official carried a small tin box, filled with some sort of white powder—the stuff looked like flour. He reached over Lewis's shoulder and made a round white spot on the skin.

The custom was to place the spot on the left side, over the heart. Perhaps the official was excited, or maybe he did it on purpose—I never learned for sure—but he made the powder spot on the right side of the condemned man's chest.

Two other Indians stepped forward and grabbed Lewis's hands, holding his arms out from his sides.

I slipped away to the hilltop and retrieved my camera. No one seemed to pay any attention to me. I sidled up to a spot on the east side of the courthouse and set up my tripod. Here I was partially hidden by a pile of firewood.

A man carrying a rifle walked toward Lewis. I thought he was the Indian sheriff, but he wasn't. Later I learned that the sheriff, who was supposed to fire the fatal bullet according to tribal tradition, refused to do it because he was a personal friend of Lewis'. The chief deputy followed suit, so another deputy had to do the job.

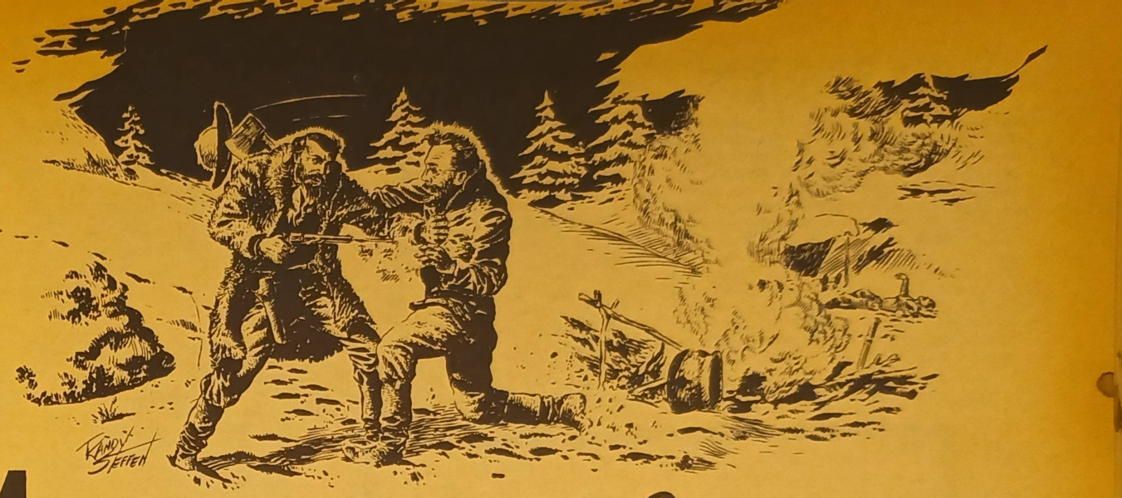
THE executioner stopped about twenty feet from Lewis, took deliberate aim, and fired. White powder rose from the brown chest, and the bullet struck the ground behind Lewis. He fell back, the Indians on each side still holding his arms.

A white man ran forward and grabbed Lewis' feet. Still the Indian didn't die—I saw him moving. Finally, after they had waited about fifteen minutes, one of the Indians took out a handkerchief and clamped it over Lewis's mouth and nose, smothering him.

I had been so absorbed in watching that I had forgotten about taking a picture. I took one after it was all over, showing Lewis prone on the blanket and the group around him. Then I gathered up my equipment and left.

As I rode into the trees, on my way back to Red Oak, I heard a mournful sound from the direction of the creek where Lewis and his wife had been camping. It was the high-pitched wailing of a woman.

That execution was something of a historic event. Statehood came to Oklahoma a few years later, and the white man's law took over. Other men were executed, many of them. But Silan Lewis was the last man to be executed by the Choctaws under their tribal laws.



MAN-EATER of Powderhorn Creek

By E. WARD McCRAY

Illustrated by Randy Steffen

THE judge's eyes carefully avoided those of the tall man who stood before him awaiting sentence. He cleared his throat, then continued, "To other sickening details of your crime, I will not refer. Silence is kindness. . . ."

The courtroom was jammed with spectators but so still it might have been empty. No one stirred. Two women had fainted earlier in the trial. Several men had rushed from the room. Every pair of eyes reflected glazed horror.

The saturnine expression on the prisoner's face did not change as the judge, in formal, stereotyped court language sentenced him to hang by the neck until he was dead.

Ten years before, late in the autumn of 1873, a prospector named Alfred Packer and a party of five other men—Humphreys, Swan, Miller, Moon and a big, rugged Englishman named Bell—began a dangerous journey across the Divide in southwestern Colorado. Packer was to guide the men to the Rio Grande valley, although the party had been warned by the friendly Indian chief, Ouray, that such a trip was impossible at that time of the year.

By the time they reached a small plateau in the San Juan range, near the present town of Lake City, the snow was piled in huge drifts and further travel was out of the question. Game was scarce and their food supplies were soon exhausted.

No one but Packer has ever *known* what happened at that camp, but the following spring he appeared alone, apparently almost dead from the severe cold and starvation, at the Los Pinos Indian Agency on the Cochetopa. He told his story of being snowed in at camp all winter and, after he was fed, went on his way.

LATER, relatives and friends of the missing men began to be suspicious of their disappearance and inquiries were made. The Saguache marshal questioned Packer.

"What happened to those men who started out with you last fall?"

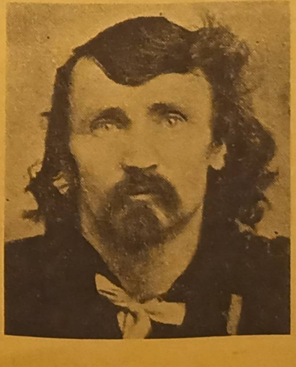
"Oh—you mean Bell and those fellows?" Packer's eyes shifted beneath his broad brow. "Why, four of 'em headed south. Moon, he died in the blizzard."

"Where'd you get all this money you been spending around in the saloons, Packer?"

The prospector bared his stained teeth in a grin. "I been workin'."

The marshal studied him for a moment with hard eyes. Packer was tall and wiry in build. Long, tangled, coal-black hair touched his shoulders. A stringy mustache drooped over his thin-lipped mouth above an equally stringy imperial beard. His eyes, as he stared back at the marshal, were morose and unintelligent. There was no hint of defiance in his manner, but something about the man made the marshal uneasy. He decided to send a posse out to have a look at that campsite.

Prospector Alfred Packer



Packer was taken along as a guide, but on the first trip, he deliberately misled the posse. On the second trip, after certain threats by the angered marshal, he led them to the spot near Powderhorn Creek where he and his party had camped. There, they found the bodies of the men. Or rather—what was left of them. They had not been eaten by wild animals. The flesh of all five men had been butchered.

PACKER, in the face of this grisly evidence, was quite calm. "Well, of course I didn't want to tell you about all this. But I'll have to tell now, I guess. We was starvin', and me bein' the guide, it seemed I ought to try and figure some way to get us out of here. So I climbed that peak over there to try to get my bearings a little, and on the way back, I tried to scare up some game but I didn't see a thing.

"I come back into camp and Bell—the Englishman—was all alone cookin' some meat. I says to him, 'Where in hell you get *that?*' Bell jumped to his feet with a crazy look on his face and rushed at me with a hatchet. We fought in the snow and I knew it was him or me—so I shot him!

"Then I looked around and I seen the other four was all dead. Bell had killed them with the hatchet. He'd cut some meat off of Moon, and that was what he was cookin'."

A sickly grin flickered across Packer's mouth as he darted a look at the stony faces of the men who stood about him. "Well, what was I to do?" he whined. "There I was with five dead men and me half-starved, and the smell of that meat cookin' on the fire . . . I tried it and it wasn't so bad if you was as hungry as I was, and you kept your mind off of what you was eatin' . . ."

His voice trailed off in a mixture of uneasiness and defiance, but as no one

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Cannibalism—American Style . . .

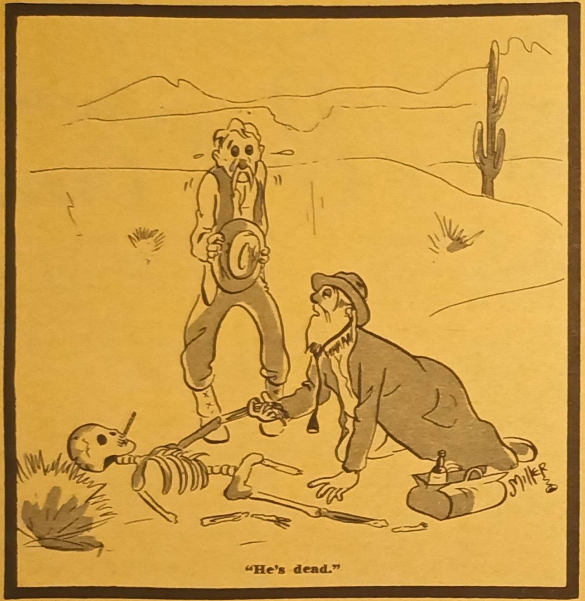
A True Story That's Hard to Believe

Cowboy Rides A Camel

(Continued from page 35)

WE START for camp. It ain't all roses. Sometimes one of us is down, but most of the time all three are on the ground at once. But we drag him in and present him to Croppy for the night. Croppy is used to having bronc horses necked to him. He's just as salty as any man's camel. We hobble old "Humpy" and tie his neck down as close to Croppy's as we can. We let them have at it. Humpy grabs a mouthful of mule while Croppy counters with planting both hind feet in Humpy's mid-section. They both call it a draw and start feeding.

Two weeks later we put our camel in a corral and start looking for Bitter Creek Bill. But he's drifted with most of our tobacco and extra clothes. We don't worry, for we've landed old Humpy. I'm going to ride Mr. Camel right down the main street of Wollie Burg and show them waddies what we raise out in the sticks!



"He's dead."

Next morning we get busy and build a chute to saddle old Humpy in. We have a lot of padding to do to make my kak fit his hump. We get it on and screwed down plenty tight and put my hackamore on his nose, so he can't bite. Smokey wants me to ride him with a bridle. All the pictures I've seen of camels show the sheiks have a noseband on them, and no sheik is gonna outclass me.

I climb up on the chute and fork him. He feels a long way from the ground, but I'm not backing up. I've got my angora chaps on and a pair of tripe hooks low on my heels.

Smokey opens the gate, and I ride out. Humpy starts down the way we brought him in. He has a far-away look in his eyes. I look back at Smokey. He is leaning against the gatepost wanting to cry

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Man-Eater of Powderhorn Creek

(Continued from page 39)

spoke, he continued. "I camped right here in the gulch until spring, eatin' the best parts. I got so I didn't even think about what it was. Sure, I took their money! You don't think I was just goin' to let it *lay* there, do you?"

AFTER Packer was arrested and returned to Lake City to face a charge of murder, he somehow managed to escape. An extensive search was carried on but it was not until nine years later that he finally was discovered, hiding under the name of Swartz in the mountains of Wyoming. The evidence against him was circumstantial, of course, although Packer readily admitted eating flesh of the victims. However, he steadfastly denied having murdered any of the men except Bell, whom he claimed he had killed in self defense.

"Doc" C. W. Shores, then sheriff of Gunnison County, Colorado, stated publicly that in his opinion Packer was "guilty as hell," and that he had a slimy, detestable mind quite capable of planning and carrying into execution the hideous crime. New evidence was uncovered which indicated that Packer had made numerous inquiries as to the amount of money the men in his party would be carrying with them. When he discovered that Israel Swan was reported to have a considerable sum, Packer attempted to persuade him to make the journey with him alone, without the other four men.

Considerable fiction has grown up around this gruesome case. One of the favorite stories is that Judge Gerry, following conviction of Packer, declared bitterly, "Stand up, ye son-of-a-gun, and receive yer sentence. When there was only six Democrats in Hinsdale County, ye et *five* of them!"

However, this version of Judge Gerry's sentence has been traced to one of the saloon hangers-on who had been present at the trial. Actually, the judge—a former federal jurist—used elegant and formal language in sentencing the cannibal to be hanged. Packer stood with his arms folded and his head thrown back in sullen defiance.

"Alfred Packer," said the judge, "a jury finds you guilty of willful and premeditated murder—a murder revolting in its details. In 1874 you, in company with five companions, passed through this beautiful mountain valley. At that time, the hand of man had not marred the beauties of nature. The picture was fresh from the hand of the Great Artist who created it. You and your companions camped at the base of a grand old mountain in sight of the place you now stand, on the banks of a stream as pure and beautiful as ever traced by the finger of God upon the bosom of the earth. Your every surrounding was calculated to impress upon your heart and nature the omnipotence of the Diety and the helplessness of your own feeble life. In this goodly favored spot, you conceived your murderous design."

THE judge paused in his impassioned speech for a brief moment. Not even the sound of breathing could be heard in the crowded courtroom. The prisoner gazed straight ahead with a stony countenance.

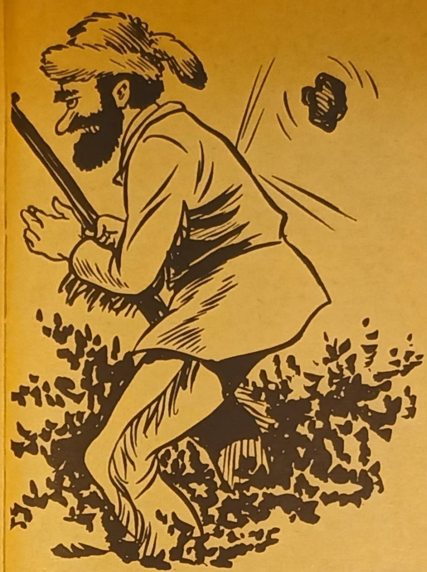
"You and your victims had a weary march and when the shadows of the mountain fell upon your little party and night drew her sable curtain around you —when your unsuspecting victims lay on the ground and were soon lost in sleep, sweetly unconscious of danger from any source and particularly from you, their trusted companion—you cruelly and brutally slew them all. You then and there robbed the living of life, then robbed the dead of the reward of honest toil which they had accumulated.

"To other sickening details of your crime, I will not refer. Silence is kindness. I do not say these things to harrow your soul. You, Alfred Packer, sowed the wind; you must now reap the whirlwind. Society cannot forgive you for the crime you have committed. . . ."

Packer's attorneys secured a new trial and change of venue to Gunnison County, Colorado. There also, he was found guilty, but this time the presiding judge sentenced him to forty years in prison. Since Packer was about thirty-five years of age at the time of this second trial, the penalty was virtually a life sentence.

When sixteen years of his sentence had been served in the prison at Canon City, Colorado, he was released as the result of a newspaper campaign. The newspaper contended that Packer had not been convicted of murder but only of cannibalism.

Packer died five years after his release —five years spent in prospecting and puttering about the country, an outcast shunned by all men. The little plateau where he and his ill-fated companions camped may be seen as one starts the ascent of Slumgullion Pass north of Lake City. It is marked on maps as "Cannibal Plateau."



INDIAN FIGHT

By J. M. McPHEE

Illustrated by C. Y. Renick

This is an experience you won't soon forget. It's told by one of those old pioneers who found the West wild—and blamed dangerous.

WE had finished the moose stew and boiled potatoes. The dishes had been washed and stowed away in the china closet, which consisted of an empty egg case nailed to the cabin wall. Spruce wood crackled in the little Yukon stove. John Carlson and I lay on our bunks, contentedly smoking our pipes. Above us, on the cabin wall, hung the old man's single-shot Sharp's rifle, which he had brought from Indian Territory to Alaska in 1880. I wondered if he had ever used it on Indians back in the old days. I asked if he'd ever been in an Indian fight.

The old man laid his pipe on an empty gasoline case, which served as a stand beside his bunk. The story from now on is his.

It was in the spring of 1875. Me and my pardner had been trapping in the mountains of Colorado. We had our women with us. It had been a good winter with lots of fur, lots of meat and nobody bothering us. The country was full of elk and deer. The women had made a big teepee out of elk skins. They'd done everything else around camp, too, 'cept hunting and trapping. Both were Cheyenne gals and two better ones I never saw. They were sisters. Mine was the oldest. She knew a lot about that country. I always respected her judgment when out on these hunting and trapping trips.

We were several days on the trail to Pueblo without seeing Injun sign. We were taking it easy since the horses were thin after a hard winter. We made early camps so they could have a long time on grass each night. The weather was nice. We never set up a tent or teepee—just spread our buffalo robes around a fire and slept under the stars. In that country we could camp by water every night. When meat was needed, we knocked over a deer. We were young and happy. It seemed like we had everything in the world.

ONE evening we stopped in a little clearing by the river. It had everything—grass, wood and water. After we'd pulled the packs off the horses and made camp, my woman went to the river for water. When she came back, she said we should move on after we ate. She had seen Injun tracks. We went over and looked. Sure enough, there were tracks of twenty or more Injuns but no horse tracks. That meant a war party, or horse-stealing party, was traveling on foot with the idea of bringing back horses and scalps. When braves went out on foot and came back riding, they'd really roped themselves a hunk of glory. The tracks were several days old.

My woman wanted to pack up and git away fast. We reasoned with her, arguing that the Injuns were gone at least three days. Finally, we convinced her, but she did make us move camp to a point that stuck out into the river. It was all grown with willers. She figured we'd be safer there than in the open.

After we'd moved camp, she made us pile our packs around the beds. We then got out loading tools and powder and loaded up all our cartridges. At that time I had the old 40-90 Sharps that hangs on the wall there, and my pardner had a .44 Sharps that shot 77 grains of powder and a 470 grain bullet. My woman made us take our guns and cartridges to bed with us. My pardner laughed at her, but I felt that she knowed mor'n either of us about Injuns.

She had us up early next morning. My pardner went for the horses while she and her sister got breakfast. I'd just started rolling up our bed robes when I heerd a rifle shot out towards the horses. I grabbed my rifle while the women kicked out the fire. My pardner came running. Behind him was a bunch of Injuns on foot, the head one belting him every jump with his bow, counting coup. I couldn't shoot 'til they got into the willers. My pardner, figuring he was about in camp and that I'd be ready, threw himself flat. I let daylight through the coup-counter. At the shot, every Injun turned and ran. My pardner crawled into camp and we lay there, not making a sound. When he got his wind back, he told us that just as he started to drive the horses to camp, the Injuns rose up out of the grass and took after him. He fired, missed, then ran for camp. One Injun was a lot faster than the rest and had gotten close enough to hit him several cracks with his bow. That was the one I'd knocked over.

THERE wasn't anything to do but lie quiet. Out in the open we could hear the Injuns rounding up our horses, yelling and laughing. They figured they had us cinched, and it shore looked like it. From their language, my woman figgered they were Blackfeet.

Soon they came creeping through the bresh on their bellies. One could speak a little English. He called out for us to lay down our guns and come out peaceable and they wouldn't harm us. We never made a sound. That got 'em mad and they threw rocks at us for a spell. One rock hit me on the back and like to have broken it. I thought that I'd sure like to get my sights on the so-and-so who threw that rock. I'd even up with him. Everybody else got hit by rocks, too. It was painful but not serious. My woman was awful mad at 'em for stoning us and wanted to sing a Cheyenne Strong-Heart Song, but I told her to keep still and let them worry about us. They did, too—our keeping quiet got them. We could hear them talking it over.

Finally, they started shooting. Lucky for us they all didn't have guns. Nobody got hit. They began calling back and forth again. Then they all started yelling at once and came on the run. Right then I felt proud of my woman for making us change camps. We had the river on three sides. My pardner and I dropped an Injun each. That stopped 'em. They drew back and left us alone. My woman took my six-shooter and crept down through the bresh to where she could see the river. When she came back, she said she could see two of 'em sitting at the edge of the bresh, keeping guard so we couldn't get away by water. I thought it'd give 'em a lesson if I could knock one over. I crept back with her and had her point 'em out. I set up my rest sticks, I figgered 'em about 300 yards off, and set the sight for that range. I got the sight on one and let go. My woman said I hit him, so we got out in a hurry. The smoke from my gun showed where we were and they peppered away at the smoke.

During the day they throwed rocks at us but never hurt us any. Then things got quiet for a long time and we got to wondering what they were up to. My pardner's woman heard a slight movement in the willers. It was very slight, but we heard it from time to time. Pardner got out his six-shooter

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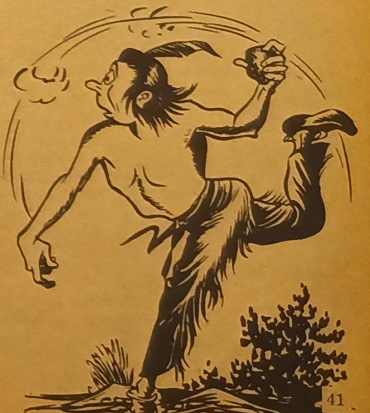


Cowboy Rides A Camel

(Continued from page 40)

and wishing he was in my place. Humpy is stepping out. But all too soon the picture changes. We come to the forks of the trail. Humpy wants to go North to the badlands; I want to go East to Wollie Burg. Right there I find out that infant has forgot all about me, so I reaches out and gets a short hold on my right rein to spin him around, but nothing doing. That neck is solid bone and no bend to it.

I sock one of my tripe hooks in his shoulder. He brings that head around and misses me. He would have bit his own tail off if his mouth hadn't been tied shut, but he is making good time in the opposite direction from the way I want to go, and I'm mad. I hang both spurs straight in, and that highbinder humps up and sticks his face out as though he had the lockjaw. I see my hackamore come apart and old Humpy is wild loose!

I take down my old seagrass, build a hole in it and pitch it over his head. Thought I would try choking him for a change, but when I start taking up slack, he reaches around and grabs a mouthful of chaps. When he breaks loose, he's got chaps, part of my top boot, and it feels like he's bit my shin bone in two, but I can still wiggle my toes. His hide is so thick and his hair so long on his neck we would've been across the badlands before I could of choked him down.

I build a loop in the other end of my rope and snare a front foot. I pull it against his belly and tie it hard and fast to the saddle horn. I change his gait so he hops around, but I'm not getting anywhere. I can't set up on a hump and starve to death, so I am ready to part company with Humpy. I paid fifty simoleons for that old kak he is wearing, and I'm going to take it with me.

Humpy makes a pass to bite the rope on his foot and gets his head tangled up with his hind legs. He turns over. I hear something break as I go flying through the air and bore a hole in the sand with my head. When I get the sand out of my eyes, what do I see but old Humpy going down the trail with his short paint brush tail standing straight out and my saddle bumping along in the sand, tied to old Humpy's foot. The cinch has broke, and there I am plenty sorry for myself, hungry and thirsty and ten miles to walk through the sand to camp.

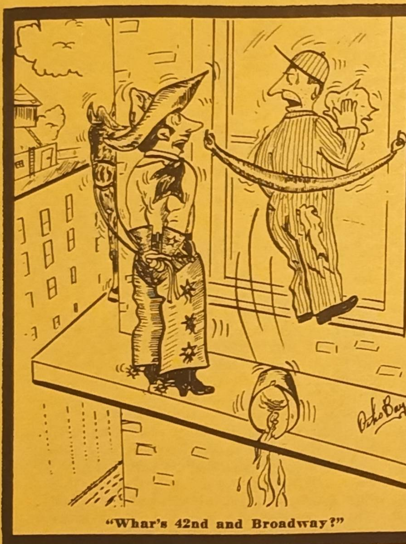
I cuss the world by sections and then start overland for camp. When I get to where I can smell smoke, I forget my troubles. I am close to coffee and chuck. When I limp in, Smokey doesn't have to ask what's the matter. He can see. But I beat him to it. I look down at half my boot top gone and laugh. Smokey folds up and kicks around to get air.

I put in a week, trailing in the badlands, looking for my kak, but old Humpy just fades away. He's never seen again. I never do find my saddle.

No old-time story dwarfs the feat of four Denver newspaper men—one of them Gene Fowler—in the twentieth century.

Late of an evening the reporters were consoling each other about the scarcity of good news material. Then one of them—Fowler, according to some versions—had an inspiration. They finished their drinks, then hurried back to the news service office. Their fictional interview with the leading men of a British American syndicate went flashing over the world. Financiers of both countries had formed a syndicate, had purchased the Great Wall of China and were going to remove the time-worn stones! Already the Chinese populace were resentful of British occupation in Hong Kong; the story set off the powder kegs. Aroused young Chinese stormed Hong Kong; British and American warships steamed hurriedly to the support of the besieged city. Conflict waged for months.

That was how the Boxer Rebellion, as historians call it, began in the American West.



"Whar's 42nd and Broadway?"

Too Tough to Die

(Continued from page 33)

receipts, and the $26,000 tab could easily have been picked up.

But by some weird financial legerdemain, the County Commissioners declared all contracts void. Construction proceeded on a piecework basis. Costs promptly spiraled where desks cost $100, chairs $50, and water closets $8,000. When the first calendar was hung, the buildings had cost $75,000 instead of $26,000.

Commissioners bungled along until they were $70,000 in debt. Scrip, bearing usurious interest, was issued to keep the County solvent. In the land of hard money, the scrip didn't gain acceptance. Its value plummeted to a 70 per cent discount. Creditors offset this by charging the County $1,000 when only $300 in supplies had been ordered.

Debt and scrip compounded until the County was forced to float 10% interest bearing bonds to liquidate its $180,000 debt. By 1890 the debt had mounted to $300,000 despite $100,000 payment in interest!

When the Delamar strike emptied Pioche, Lincoln County courthouse could have been used for a poorhouse. In 1936, some 65 years after construction, the Courthouse was finally paid off, but unfortunately it had been condemned and abandoned three years previously.

Estimated cost is around a million dollars, with 90% having been spent in interest and graft! A Las Vegas resort tried to purchase the boarded-up building a few years ago, as a tourist attraction, but terms couldn't be agreed upon. So it stands today, a dusty reminder of former glory.

THOUGH residents admit that Pioche is quieter since Nevada Highway 93 skirts its edges instead of using Main Street, still there is considerable "activity" on payday at the mines. Pioche was not dead—just sleeping from the time of the Delamar strike in 1894 until two brothers demonstrated their faith in the camp forty years later.

Ed and George Snyder, from Salt Lake City, knew the high grade silver ores were depleted, but there were vast deposits of a complex lead-zinc-silver ore remaining. Borrowing heavily, the Snyders began development work. Ten years later they came up with a selective floatation process to recover values. Full scale production didn't begin until 1923. The Combined Metals companies are now producing nine-tenths of Nevada's zinc, and 50% of the lead. A mill to recover manganese from their thousands of acres of mining property is also being built.

Corporation officials estimate there is more ore in sight than has been taken in the past 30 years, despite the acceleration rate of exploitation. Values already produced exceed the forty millions picked out when Pioche was a boom camp.

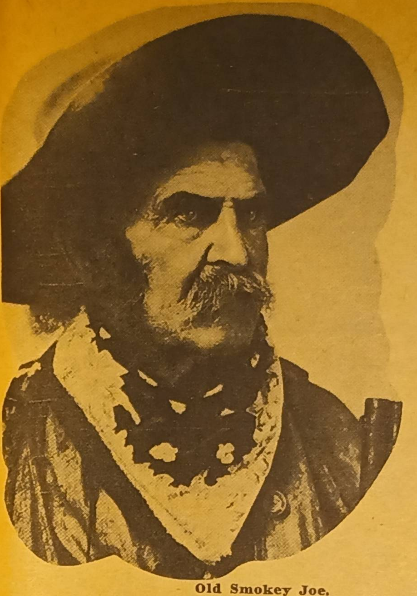
Largely due to the 400-man payroll of Combined Metals, Pioche has mellowed in stable prosperity. Tourists, whose accommodations are two hotels, and a motel, are sometimes surprised to learn that Pioche hasn't had a murder for a couple of years. Then a bartender shot his brother-in-law, who now rests in an unmarked grave. Piochers admit the gun-wielder escaped with little more than a parole, after a petition was submitted to the Governor asking leniency.

"The jury spent more time in jail considering the verdict than he did," they laugh. "Pioche has changed," some add, "but not very much."

The origin of a familiar phrase is explained as follows. A weary traveler stopped at a frontier cabin and asked if he could get food and spend the night there. The pioneer agreed immediately and shortly set out their supper, a slab of fat pork.

"I never eat pork," said the traveler.

The frontiersman nodded. "Then help yourself to the mustard."



Old Smokey Joe.

Ever have an Indian shoot you in the head, then cut a ring off your finger? Come on now—no fibbing! No? Well, you might'uv—if you'd lived back in the "good old days."

SMOKEY JOE

By A. M. HARTUNG

Photo by the Author

SLOWLY but surely the frontier is drying up. There are still wilderness spots—"last frontier" retreats, but modern civilization has left little that still looks like it did in the "old days"—really nothing that "acts" like the old frontier.

And, of course, the authentic old timers are about gone, too. Whenever I find one of these old fellows who isn't a "blow hard" and who tells about the old days in simple narrative form, neither adding to or taking from, I can listen for days.

Smokey Joe was one of these old timers. He had seen service as a plainsman, as a mountain man, a fur trapper, scout and guide. Joe had worked on the open range. He had seen the snows of 80-odd winters. Several times he had acted as guide for emigrant trains going overland from the Missouri river to the Pacific Coast.

Old Joe and his ancient briar pipe were inseparable. Let him cram its worn bowl with tobacco, light it and draw heavily on the battered stem, and his memory opened up. His mind would begin to back track.

There was a finger missing from his right hand. Always someone would ask about it. Old Joe would smile and a gleam come into his eyes. From now on it's old Smokey Joe himself talking.

NOW, that finger that you don't see—it carried two brass rings years ago. I got them off a little Crow Injun I shot before he could hit me. I slipped the rings on my finger. They was too small, but by forcing a little I got them on. The joint of my fingers swelled up later on and I never could take them off again.

I thought they was there for keeps.

I had a pardner in them days called "Tetom Tom." He was the best friend I ever had. We was running our traps up in Wyoming one frosty morning. Tom was a short ways up the creek in the brush. I was taking a bobcat out of my trap when an Injun shot me through the hair on top of my head. It plumb plowed a furrow through my scalp and knocked me cold.

I bled like a stuck hog, but was just stunned. The Injun thought he'd killed me. He was just fixing to scalp me when he seen them brass rings on my finger. I was lying face down in the blood and dirt. He decided to get them rings first—scalping could wait.

But they wouldn't come off over the joint. He began whittling the joint with his scalping knife. I felt something as I was coming back to consciousness, but I laid still, clamped my teeth, and played possum.

The Injun cut off the joint, slipped the bloody rings off, and put them on his own finger. He was now ready to scalp me.

I heard the bullet as it hit him. It was a sort of "whack" like you'd spank a fat baby's rump. He slumped over me. I got out from under him quick, and looked around to see Tom hurrying up. I told him, "Man, I was never so glad to see a friend in my life!"

Tom tied a buckskin string around the finger to stop the blood. The finger soon healed up, and I never missed it at all. I'd never think of it even now if someone didn't call my attention to it.

TOM was a crack shot, the best hunter I ever worked with. He sure loved hosses. I learned a lot about them from him. Tom told me once, "Joe, a hoss knows mor'n a man might think. Never spur a hoss where he don't want to go. There's lots of times a hoss knows a heap mor'n a man." I used to lie back with a good pipe and listen to Tom talk about hosses by the hour.

Most hosses are good swimmers, but if you want to play safe in swimming a hoss, loosen the cinches and pull off the bridle as he goes into the water. You may not come out just where you wanted to on the other side—BUT YOU'LL COME OUT. Many a fellow has drowned himself and his hoss by pulling on the reins. If you're lost in a blizzard, give your hoss his head—a hoss don't get lost out in the open.

A hoss loves the range where he was born. A plains hoss hates the mountains. I like to watch 'um in fly time—they'll bunch up heads to tails, each hoss using his pardner's tail for a fly-brush.

They all love pure, cold running water. Most drink with their heads upstream—each hoss trying to get above the rile.

Most other animals hide their young when they go for water. But when a colt is born, his mother never leaves him. Hosses stay in bands so wolves don't have much chance. When wolves show, the hosses bunch up. They won't run, and they're dangerous at both ends. Once a wolf feels the hoofs of a range mare, it sort of takes his appetite.

THEM early day "free trappers" was a wild bunch. Once a year these old trappers had a "blow out" in some hidden valley. They had one helluva dangerous pastime known as "shootin' the cup." This was shooting a cup of liquor off each other's head. They'd flip a coin for the first shot.

Once, on the Yellowstone River, three trappers agreed to hunt and trap together for a few months' time. To celebrate the pact, they decided to shoot the cup.

Later on, they had some trouble over an Injun woman. Finally, a sort of peace was patched up but it looked shaky. Again, to celebrate peace in camp, they decided to shoot the cup. The two that was contesting over the Injun woman flipped a coin. The winner placed a cup of liquor on the other's head, stepped back 50 feet, turned and shot the man in the center of the forehead. He claimed at once that it was a pure accident. But the third trapper pulled his revolver and shot the killer through the heart. A few weeks later this third member of the group was drowned while crossing the river. That ends that tale.

MY pard Tom knew both Charley Russell and his side pardner, Con Price. This Con was the beatenest broncstomper in all the West. It was said he could ride anything with hair on it. Russell was different from Con when it came to hosses. He wanted them gentle. He liked to paint outlaws, of course. Charley knew hosses, but he got fooled on a hoss trade one time.

A stranger came across the range leading an extra fine-looking hoss. Charley fell for this animal hard. He bought that hoss. But he could never ride the outlaw. The hoss acted like a killer. He was vicious, really dangerous.

Charley immediately thought of his friend Con Price. Con was riding for the Bear Paw outfit in the mountains now and Charley was with the Milk River outfit in the Judith basin. They only

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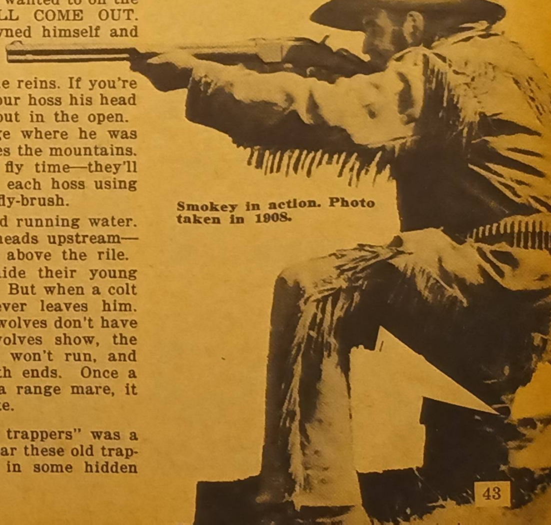


Smokey in action. Photo taken in 1908.

Indian Fight

(Continued from page 41)

and held the trigger back while he cocked it, so's not to make any noise with the lock. After a long wait he saw Mr. Injun parting the willers with his spear. Taking a good sight, Pardner shot him through the head. We got another shower of rocks for that. Then all was quiet for a long time.

We decided that we should stick it out till dark, then swim the river and make a getaway. Our horses were gone for sure and we figgered it'd be better to lose our whole outfit than our lives. The women said they didn't want to leave the new teepee nor our new buckskin suits they'd made, so we dug 'em out of the packs. The teepee was too heavy to pack, so the women took it back into the bresh and cached it, hoping the Injuns wouldn't find it. We wrapped our loading tools in some old moccasins and buried 'em, along with what bullets we had left.

THE woman had seen a dry cottonwood log on the river bank. When it got dark, we sneaked down to the water and waited for a spell, looking and listening. The Injuns were quiet, but probably all around us. We waited till it was pitch-dark, took off our clothes and rolled that log into the water. We put our guns and clothes on the log and pushed it out until the water was over our heads. Swimming alongside the log, we made it to the other bank and got into our clothes. Then we made tracks out of there!

When it got daylight, we took a good look around the country from the top of a hill. There was no sign of an Injun, so we went down into the bresh by a creek for the day. That afternoon we took another look from the hill. The country was still empty.

Pardner killed a deer. After it got plumb dark, we lit a fire, cooked some meat and had a good feed. We hadn't eaten since the evening before the Injuns jumped us.

Next morning there was nothing to be seen follering us, so we ate and started walking. We finally came to the Goodnight Ranch, west of Pueblo. Mr. Goodnight fed us good and sent us on to Pueblo with a buckboard and team. He was a mighty fine man.

Later, we went back to where we had the fight to see if the Injuns had found our teepee. By George, they hadn't! It, our loading tools, bullets and buckskin suits were all that we saved out of our whole outfit.

Guess I should include our scalps in that list, too . . .

Murder in the Bitterroots

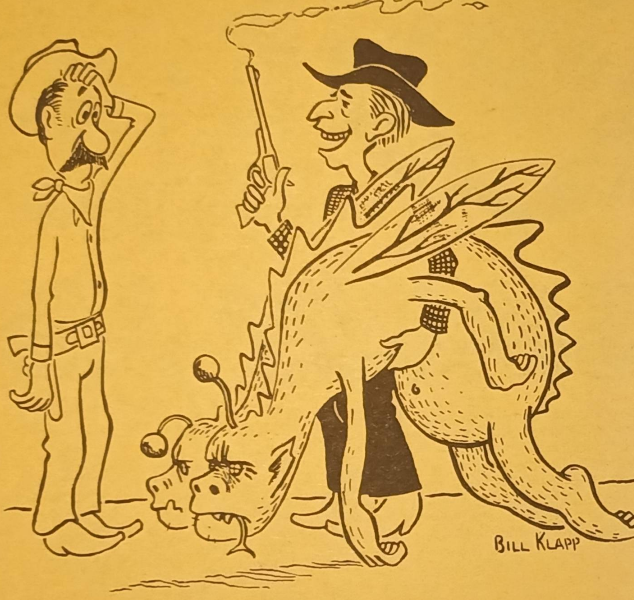
(Continued from page 21)

declared that he was going after the four.

It took some time to convince the authorities that he was right, but he was finally handed requisitions from the governors of Washington, Oregon and California to extradite the murderers if he found them.

Thus began one of the strangest, most difficult man hunts in western history. With a companion, Beachy followed the four outlaws through Washington, Oregon and on into California, baffled on every turn. But Beachy was a first class detective. He had a strong motive for wanting venegeance, since Magruder had been one of his best friends.

IN San Francisco, with the help of police, Beachy found his men, and headed back to Lewiston. The major portion of the drama was yet to be played. All the evidence he had was purely circumstantial. He had to get a confession from one of the four.



"Shot'um while I was drinking."

Beachy was a shrewd judge of character. He picked Bill Page as the most likely to fold up and confess. So, he set his little trap.

All four prisoners were confined in one cell. One by one, Howard, Romaine and Lowery were taken out. Page looked on with terrified eyes. Finally, a guard came and roughly ordered him out. Trembling, Page walked down a small hallway.

Then, as he looked into an open door, he gave a scream of horror. Hanging from the beams in the room were four nooses, a box placed under each one. Beachy had appeared and Page grabbed him with panicky hands.

"For God's sake man, not that!" he babbled.

Beachy looked at him for a moment in silence, no pity on his face. "I didn't intend for you to see this room, Page. But it's just as well. You're going to hang—unless you confess."

"The others will kill me," Page cried.

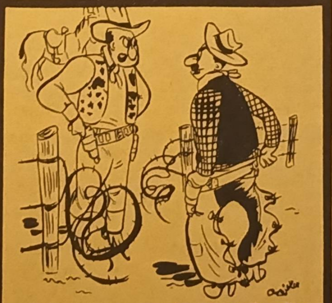
"They've already confessed," Beachy lied, hardly daring to hope that the ruse would work.

Bill Page confessed. The other three outlaws were not aware of it until the day of the trial. Then it was too late. On March 4, 1864, Howard, Romaine and Lowery danced on thin air, before some ten thousand people, among whom were hundreds of Nez Perce Indians.

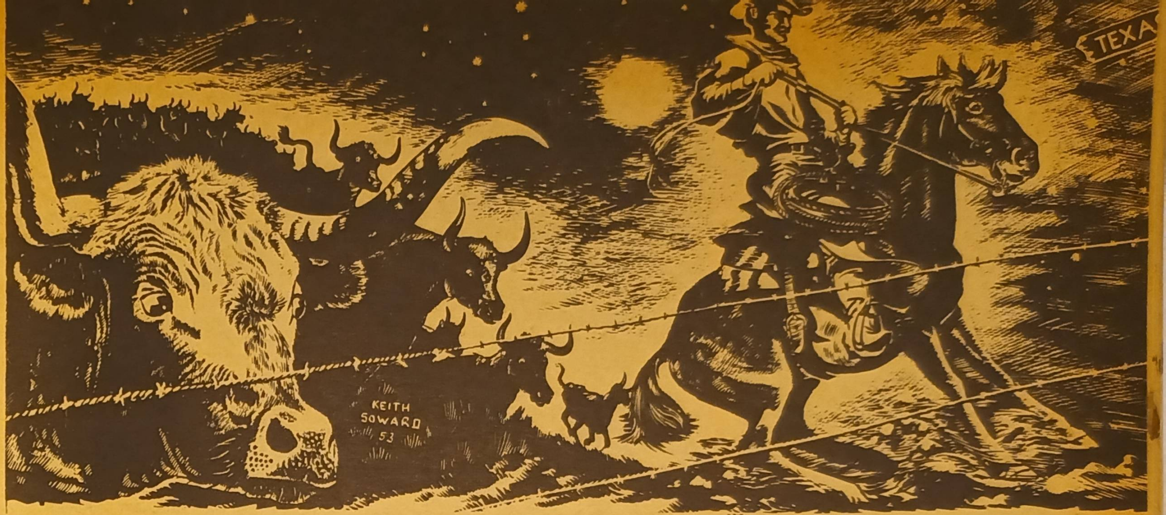
Page was given his freedom and was killed a year later in a drunken brawl. He was an outcast. Although the law had freed him, the people would not associate with him.

Before Page was killed, however, Beachy forced the man to accompany him to the site of the wholesale murder. There lay the picked bones of five men, and the bones of several animals which the outlaws had shot before leaving the scene. The remains were taken back and buried in the Lewiston cemetery.

The lust for gold had caused the death of eight men. Page brought the total to nine.



"If you cut my fence again, I'm gonna slap your hands!"



Saved *by a* Glass-eyed Horse

By CAPT. W. M. MOLESWORTH with HART STILWELL

Illustrated by Keith Soward

A strong barbed wire fence ahead—the roar of eight thousand stampeding hooves behind. You're trapped. Only a good horse can save your life—a damned good horse . . .

I GUESS it was about an hour before midnight when the herd stampeded.

When cattle bed down at night, they don't all lie with their heads pointing the same way. But when they stampede, they rise together, and those pointed the wrong way swing as they get up. In no time they're all going the same way.

They don't do any bellowing nor make other noises except the sounds their hoofs make beating on the ground and their long horns banging together. Still, a big herd on a stampede sounds a lot like rumbling, steady thunder.

A mounted cowhand isn't in danger from a stampede herd unless his horse falls, or he gets trapped by a fence. That's what happened to me that night—I got trapped by one of those barbed-wire fences that were beginning to creep across West Texas.

Twelve of us started the drive from the Uvalde country in South Texas. We were bound for the railroads in Kansas. It was the middle of February, 1885. We had two thousand head of steers.

We were all young—the oldest being twenty-four. I was only eighteen. Naturally. I started driving drag.

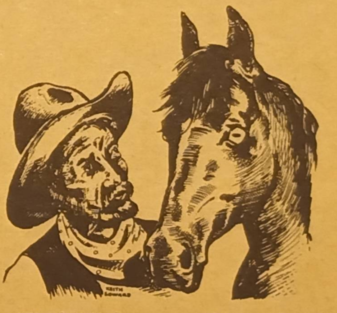
But, before the drive was over, I was pointing the herd. It made me feel mighty proud since I was the youngest man in the outfit.

The steers were pretty wild. It took a spell to get them trail broke. They belonged to the 7-D ranch, which was owned by a syndicate.

We didn't make much headway the first day. The steers did a lot of milling around, were fidgety and hard to handle. They were still restless when we got them bedded down that night.

So were we. We could see a storm cloud building up. Even those who didn't stand first watch just hunkered down by the campfire. We didn't try to go to sleep.

Later the cattle got trail broke. They'd drop into formation when we started moving. When we finally got on up into Indian Territory, where there was plenty of grass and water, they got fat and slick. So did we. Life was easy.



"I'll always have a weak spot in my heart for glass-eyed horses."

But that first night . . .

Four cowhands were standing watch, riding around the herd, singing. The other four of us listened to the cowhands sing—and waited.

Cowboys don't sing just for the hell of it when they're riding the night watch. They sing so it won't ever be dead still. You let it get real quiet and any little noise might send the herd rumbling 'cross country in two seconds flat. It's like a dam breaking.

THE storm cloud got a little closer. Lightning was shooting across the northwest hills. We could hear the rumble of thunder.

We were ready.

I had a horse I called Glass-Eye saddled and set to go. I called him Glass-Eye because he really was what you call a glass-eyed horse—an albino. When you drove cattle up the trail in those days, each hand had a mount of eight horses furnished by the owners. Then each cowhand took his own horse along so that if he decided to quit the outfit he'd have a way to travel.

We didn't work our own horses—just let them run with the remuda. The horse wrangler took care of them.

Now Glass-Eye couldn't see worth a doggone in the daytime. The light hurt his eyes.

But at night!

When the trouble started, I was on that horse and halfway around the herd, toward the lead steers, in no time at all.

When steers stampede, they run as fast as they can. Two or three generally start pulling away from the others. What a cowhand does is get in front of the herd and turn those two or three steers. He rides up close to them, yells as loud as he can and waves his Stetson at them. When he gets them turned, the steers behind swing that way, too, just a little. When the herd swings, some of the steers catch up with the leaders, and they're all running together again.

When the leaders pull slightly away again, the cowhands try to turn them still more. They keep doing that until they got the whole herd running in a circle—"running in the mill," we called it in those days, or just milling. What a sight it would have been if a man could have looked down on it from directly above!

The cattle, once they start milling, keep running in a circle until they run themselves down. All that time the steers run silent. They're running away from something—nobody knows what. The cowhands keep working them into a tighter circle all the time they're running, until finally their horns start banging together.

Then, when the steers begin to get tired, they start bawling.

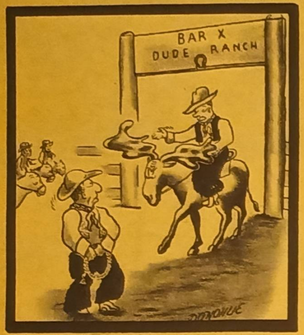
(Continued on page 46)

Saved By A Glass-Eyed Horse

(Continued from page 45)

WELL, we might have gotten the herd milling on that first nightmarish stampede except for those infernal fences. I was riding as fast as Glass-Eye could move, cutting around some steers to get a couple that had pulled away, when all of a sudden my horse stuck his hooves out in front of him and slid to a halt with his tail almost on the ground. In all the years I've ridden horses, I've never had one stop quicker.

Nor has one ever had a better reason . . .



"I found the horse in the pasture all right, Shorty, but he was the very devil to put a saddle on!"

That wonderful glass-eyed horse came to a stop with his chest square against a tall, brand new, strong barbed-wire fence! Behind me and the horse, not forty steps away, were the steers—roaring straight at us.

That horse could see the fence even on that pitch-dark, stormy night. He could see it because he was glass-eyed.

My mount didn't wait for me to tell him what to do. He reared up, swung to the left, and was running when his front hooves hit the ground. He barely squeezed between the steers and that fence.

Then that herd hit the wire.

The fence went down like it was made of cotton string—it just sort of went "ping" and was gone.

But if Glass-Eye and I had hit it first . . .

I've had a weak spot in my heart from that day to this for glass-eyed horses.

Smokey Joe

(Continued from page 43)

met once a year at the Annual Round-up. But Charley heard that Con had just got married, so he sent the hoss over as a wedding present.

Charley didn't see Con until 'way late next fall. Con pulled him over to the side and said, "Charley, if I ever get married again, and you are anywhere in the country, don't send me any more wedding presents! If you do, *old Pard*, you're going to get an awful lot of flowers! Savvy?"

And like most of the old timers' rambling accounts of life in the old days, this one ends abruptly. "No use to taper off to a drivel," Smokey Joe used to say. "When you run out of something to say, shut up!"

Looks Like Everything's Hunky-Dory!

(Continued from page 1)

they'll be making two collections of the stories in TRUE WEST plus books that are unavailable to them, etc.

Then there were three or four who wrote in saying that our reprinting of the old stories would make their original magazines valueless. I CAN'T MAKE THIS POINT STRONG ENOUGH: Our reprinting these old issues, in the way we are doing it, will not de-value your original collection *one cent.* If you don't believe this, show a collector this issue of OLD WEST, tell him his number 1 TRUE WEST is probably valueless now but that you'd like to buy it for a bargain from him anyhow. I believe you will be pretty well convinced with his answer. I think it is highly significant that we haven't received *one letter* from a genuine collector about this—and if we were reprinting the old issues exactly as they are—these collectors would have strung us up already!

Reason along with me. Let's say you have one of the very few coins on which the mint made some small mistake. Even correcting this mistake makes the same coin (without the mistake) worth face value only. If they put out another coin with a new face (a new issue of the same thing) and new writing—is this the original coin? You'd have a hard time convincing a collector!

I am getting too long-winded as usual. OLD WEST is a hundred-page magazine (including cover) without advertising and it sells for 50c. We have had only one letter saying the price was too high. To this person, and anybody else who might think so, we ask you to take a copy of this magazine to any printer and ask him the price of turning it out. The other phases of putting a magazine out will run the price up as much again as the printing price, including postage, etc., and if you can put it out, without advertising, for less than 50c, then get into the magazine business quick—the country needs you!

Actually, we would come out better financially if we published an all-new magazine. We pay the authors the same price for reprinting as we did in the original issues. We sent most of the pictures and artwork back and they must be gotten all over again, and sometimes finding the same one is three to four times harder and more time-consuming than to get new ones. I could go on for half an hour explaining this but I don't think it is necessary. The vote for reprinting the old issues, under another title, with a book unavailable to the general reading public, plus new material, has been *overwhelming*. There were a few votes in the other categories, but this one was so tall as to overshadow the others to make them near non-existent. Now the thing we are going to have to figure on closely is just how far to go on these old issues. When we get to the point where even a fair percentage of our readers have the old ones, we've got to stop. Then OLD WEST necessarily must be all new material.

The first three issues of TRUE WEST were 64 pages and cover. Taking out the advertising and going up to 96 pages and cover makes quite a difference! The advertising itself ran 15 to 17 pages per issue. So, roughly, we had 48 pages of reading matter in the first three issues of TRUE WEST. You now have 96 pages of reading matter—or exactly 48 pages more!

WHEN we get to issue number four we'll probably print two issues at a time for the reason that we had to cut down the size of TRUE WEST with issue number four. We owed the printer and everybody else concerned and seriously considered suspension of publication at that time. Those "crying" editorials you read in those days, folks, and a good many days thereafter, were for *real.*

In short, you'll be getting two magazines in one plus about half new material. Cutting out the advertising in the old issues and adding 48 pages makes quite a bonus in extra reading space!

Most comment on reproducing our cover picture on the back, without printing, is good. However, some of you say you do not want to mutilate your magazine in any way whatsoever and why can't we reproduce the cover inside. Well, printing language is hard to explain (I don't know much about it myself but I do know cost figures when they show them to me!) but it is sort of like mowing down two rows of sugar cane. You can do it with one run of the mower if they are close enough together. However, to get that row on the other side of the field you've got to go over and take it on extra. The cover is printed separate from the inside of the magazine and on a higher grade of paper. Those four colors can be arranged so that they print front and back at the same time.

Therefore, printing the front cover painting and inserting it on the inside of the magazine would roughly be as costly as beating your mother-in-law over the head once a day with gold dust in a rotten sack! Maybe we can work something out on this eventually—like making a separate printing for the prints and selling them at just about cost, including postage, etc.

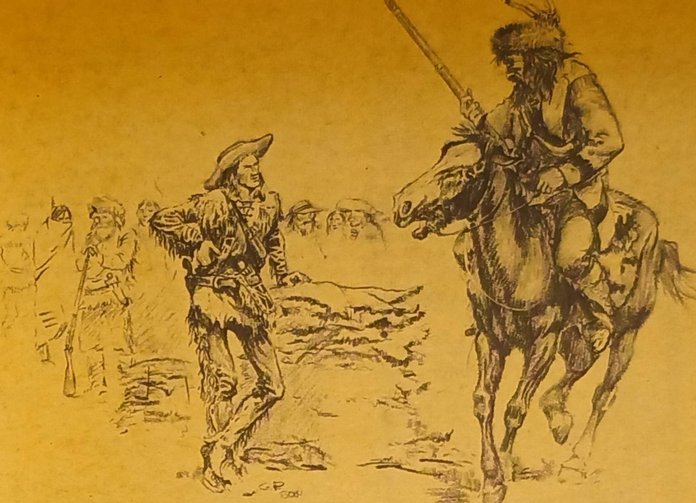
Brother, are we having our troubles! Many of you are asking if we are going to reprint the Indian series by Norman B. Wiltsey. I don't believe we should since his book, BRAVE WARRIORS, has just gone into a second printing and perhaps too many of you would have the book and resent the repetition. Brother, this business of reprinting those old first issues really has its problems!

A few of you have suggested that after we become an all-new material publication that we devote each issue to one subject like Indians, cavalry, gold rush, mountain men, etc. Well, we are sort of afraid of this since so many of you folks are really nuts on one subject and care very little about others. Therefore, we'd be offering everything to some and nothing to others.

PRIZE CONTEST: If anybody has read this far, we are offering $25.00 for a good title for our letters department. "Truly Western" in TRUE WEST of course is a play on the title. "Frontier Post" is also a play on our FRONTIER TIMES title. It isn't necessary that you play on the OLD WEST title for a handle for our letters department. Just think up a clever title, or several, and the one we select will be worth $25.00 to the winner. As in all contests, I am sure there will be many titles that are the same submitted and the only way in the world that we know to work it is to pay that $25.00 to the first acceptable title submitted. We'll print the name and address of the winner in our following issue.

To those of you who ask that each story we print be identified with the is-

(Continued on page 49)



BAD MAN

By HARRY ANDREWS

Illustrated by Geo. Phippen

"You're yellow, you %&*@¢!" John Shuman would yell — and you'd either have to agree with him, or slap leather. Personally, I like cream puffs with just the faintest taste of lemon flavor . . .

ONLY the bold attended that grand rendezvous of western trappers, near headwaters of the Big Horn River in Wyoming during the summer of 1834. Under the protection of a white flag, hostile Blackfeet Indians — the blood of white trappers still undried on their scalping knives — mingled with a motley group of pale-face adventurers.

Traders from far-off St. Louis extolled the virtues of their wares, exaggerated the cost and perils of transporting merchandise a thousand miles into the wilderness. Trappers, little less wild than the animals they caught, piled pelts in disorderly heaps for the shrewd inspection of buyers.

The unwritten code of the wilderness demanded that no trading should start until all who had pledged themselves to attend had arrived. This waiting period was a time for renewal of old friendships. Plans were made for another winter's trapping and partnerships formed.

Liquor was the only commodity the traders offered for sale during this period. Raw whisky and companionship blended to create ostentatious daring and recklessness in lonely, half-wild men who were pressing the frontier into the Pacific Ocean. Old enmities flared — sometimes fatally. Silken furs, obtained at the cost of untold hardships, changed hands as trigger-calloused fingers clumsily spread dog-eared cards fanwise on buffalo robes stretched on the ground. Silent, grim men, whose only love was the call of adventure, gambled recklessly.

Card games and conversation halted as new arrivals, with pelt-laden ponies in tow, threaded their way through a maze of tepees, merchandise, and miscellaneous camp paraphernalia. Handshaking and back-slapping was followed by a round at thick earthen jugs as old friends met. Newcomers were hustled to improvised tables laden with roast buffalo and venison steaks.

HOWEVER, no such friendliness greeted John Shuman. In sullen silence early arrivals drew aside, ignored the big French-Canadian. Shuman was a pariah among his kind. By sheer strength and pugnacious audacity he forced himself into their midst.

Traders remembered and hated Shuman because of his drunken quibbling. His hardy Canadian-trapper followers knew Shuman as a sadistic, overbearing leader. Americans, who considered the entire West "free range," held no love for him because he had driven many of them from choice trapping grounds.

Stories of outrageous treatment of kidnapped squaws had been carried into other camps by deserting members of Shuman's party, fleeing his savagery. The Blackfeet shunned him. This winter their hunting parties would be on the alert for an opportunity to raid his camp, take his horses and scalp.

John Shuman loved a fight. When hot liquor stirred his emotions, he hurled epithets at all within sight. A huge man, with ebon hair and fiery, black eyes, he was always eager to pit his cast-iron fists or his rifle against any and all who disputed his proficiency with either. Wooden crosses on the graves of his adversaries proved that he was good at both — very good.

On the second morning after his arrival at the rendezvous, Shuman became gloriously drunk. By mid-morning he was nurturing the fancy that sometime, somewhere, he had been grossly mistreated by Americans. After examining the priming of his rifle, he mounted and rode into the midst of the men he imagined had wronged him.

Shuman galloped his horse madly through the camp, sending buckskin-clad trappers, Indians, and traders scurrying to safety from flying hoofs. Brandishing his rifle, he cursed all who came within range of his voice and tossed contemptuous challenges at the Americans.

A smooth-faced, buckskin-garbed figure detached himself from the line and blocked the raging Canadian's path. Calmly he said:

"I'm an American — the least, and one of the youngest, here. I will fight you!"

For a moment Shuman leaned forward in the saddle and stared dumbfoundedly at the man. His lips parted in a leering grin and he laughed harshly. This whippersnapper would be like clay in his hands! With a quick tug of the reins, Shuman wheeled his horse. A shower of gravel pelted the beardless challenger; he mounted quickly.

The die for death had been cast! Those who watched knew that no code of honor governed actions of the duelists. Luck, guts, and singing lead would decide the struggle.

Like trained pugilists, seeking a neutral corner, the men rode to opposite sides of the camp. Suddenly, Shuman stood upright in the stirrups, pivoted his horse, and dug in his heels. With rifle thrust forward, he hurtled toward his foe. A yell of pagan hatred parted his lips.

The younger man reined his pony in sharply. He waited, pistol in hand. A gentle breeze fanned shoulder-length hair. No show of emotion clouded his face.

SHUMAN lifted his rifle and pressed the trigger. His smooth-faced foe ducked low in the saddle. Blood trickled from a searing cut across his cheek.

The color drained from Shuman's face. At close range he had missed! His opponent had dismounted, was standing with feet spread, unfired pistol at his side. With the back of his hand he wiped blood from the superficial wound on his cheek and smiled. With a wave of his pistol he motioned for Shuman to reload. Quickly the Canadian dismounted.

Nervously, Shuman fumbled with powder-horn and ramrod. His trembling fingers drove wadding and ball home; leaden arms raised the loaded rifle to fire.

There was a single pistol shot!

John Shuman cried out in anger and shock. Blood gushed from a jagged wound in his shattered arm. The pistol ball had plowed into Shuman's wrist, passed completely through, and entered the arm near his elbow.

John Shuman watched his foe reload silently. He was at the mercy of the trapper whose bullet had cut him down! An alien terror crept into the badman's heart. There was no semblance of braggadocio in his voice as humbly he asked the victor to withhold his fire.

The crowd surged forward in a body as the conqueror, with loaded pistol sheathed, led his horse away. "Who is that man?" somebody asked.

A gnarled veteran of the plains eased forward. "Trapper from Snake River Country," he offered. "I'm trapping the Yellowstone with him this winter. Name of Kit Carson . . ."

He Outrobbed Jesse James

(Continued from page 29)

ing that time the automatic pistol had come into being.

The whole world had changed. Not a law-and-order boy in the entire nation gave a single serious thought to the possibility that Bill Miner, the broken down has-been, would cause any trouble. What could an old fuddy-duddy like that do in these modern times?

Bill Miner showed them.

He teamed up with a couple of bandits, Gay Harshman and Charles Hoehn. On Sept. 23, 1903, the three of them successfully held up the Oregon & Washington train at Corbett, Oregon, robbed the passengers, and looted the strong box of the Pacific Express company.

Bill Miner had gone modern—moved from stagecoach to railway train.

By 1903 the railroads were big business. They had their own string of detectives to see that there was no such nonsense as train robberies. They set out after this modern-day Robin Hood with iron determination and with plenty of manpower. Let him redistribute somebody else's money—he wasn't going to redistribute the railroad's.

The reward for Bill Miner, dead or alive, probably flattered the aging bandit—it was $10,000. A mighty tempting chunk of cash. And the posters, it seemed to Bill, were nailed on every infernal post, tree, barn, and backhouse in the land. Bill decided the country of his birth didn't really appreciate his talents. So he crossed the border into Canada and settled down at Merritt, British Columbia, passing himself off as George Edwards, rancher and dealer in livestock.

There he led a quiet, gentlemanly life. He had three fine cowhands to take care of the stock he ran on the ranch he bought. The cowhands were fine fellows, the people there thought. They were Thomas (Shorty) Dunn, Rufe Hammel, and Louis Colquhoun—veteran and highly-gifted robbers. There was only one thing they wouldn't do—kill a man. The boss wouldn't stand for that.

Now and then George Edwards would be gone from his fine ranch home for a week or so. But he always told his neighbors he was off on a horse-buying trip. They suspected nothing. He was gone for quite a spell in May, 1904. And while he was gone Canada had her first train robbery. The neighboring ranchmen told George Edwards about it when he got back home. He seemed quite interested.

UNDOUBTEDLY, Bill Miner had a positive craving for the excitement of robbery, as well as for the feel of gold and the pleasure of giving it away. He just wouldn't quit—he couldn't quit.

He yielded to the urge again in 1906. He and two of his pals, Shorty Dunn and Louis Colquhoun, held up a Canadian Pacific railway express train on the most desolate part of its run in the Canadian Rockies. They boarded the train at a water tower and worked the hold-up just about the way they worked the one two years earlier.

However, they let a courageous mail clerk bluff them into believing there was no registered mail aboard, and thus passed up $40,000 in gold.

They did worse than that. Somehow they failed to get back to their horses, hidden in the rough mountain country. So they set out on foot.

Chief Constable William Fernie headed the search for the bandits. He was smart enough to put Indian guides on the trail in a hurry. They found the horses, then picked up the other trail and began following the outlaws. Things would have gone bad with Bill Miner and his gang right then except for a heavy rain that washed out their tracks.

But more officers joined in the search—and there were those dogged Indian trailers to reckon with. They did the job. Two days later, and sixty miles away, an Indian guide picked up the trail. He was alone at the time, so he carefully parted the brush and peered when he saw smoke from a campfire. Three heavily armed men were sitting by the fire.

"I beg your pardon, Sir, my shoe seems to have unfortunately gotten under your boot—I hope it isn't inconveniencing you."

The Indian slipped back to the officers. In short time the outlaws were surprised and ordered to give up. Shorty Dunn decided to make a play. He got a bullet in the leg for his trouble. Bill Miner surrendered without firing a shot.

He got put away for life.

At least that was the sentence—not the way things worked out. Less than a year later, newspapers were putting out extras telling about the escape of Bill Miner. There was a lot of talk, a lot of rumors about the law deliberately letting Bill out with the idea of following him to some of his hideouts and grabbing the loot he had cached away.

If that was the plan of the law, Bill Miner must have got a big kick out of the whole thing. The law-and-order boys didn't see hide nor hair of him again for four years. During most of that time he was living a quiet life in the little village of Gainesville, Georgia.

BUT the old urge for excitement drove Bill Miner on again, and in 1911 an express train of the Southern Railway was looted by five masked men when it stopped at White Springs, Georgia. Bill Miner was one of them. He got away, all right, but a miraculous coincidence trapped him. A Pinkerton detective stopped at a little cottage in Gainesville to question an elderly man working in his garden.

The man was Bill Miner—the detective recognized him.

Back to prison, for another life term.

Eight months later, the man who refused to give up broke out of the Milledgeville penitentiary. Miner was on the loose again.

Bill Miner was a sick man then. His ulcers were working overtime. He was sixty-eight years old and getting close to the end. But the spirit that carried him always to wild adventure burned with the same bright flame. Bill tried his hand once more.

That time he tried it single-handed, out in California, the old stamping ground. He might have made it stick except for that "Never Kill a Man" code.

When Bill Miner stepped out of the express car, he came face to face with a detective. Bill, fast as lightning, might have killed the detective and got away. But he wouldn't kill a man—he quietly surrendered.

He was tried and sentenced—life again.

But it was an empty gesture, for there wasn't enough life left in Bill Miner to worry about. The heavy iron doors of the prison had hardly clanged shut behind him before he took to his bed. A few days later he died.

Who, indeed, was this man called Jesse James?

He Knew Bill Miner

Dear Editor:

I suppose this letter should be addressed to Eugene Pawley, who wrote "He Outrobbed Jesse James" in your first issue. This is no criticism of Pawley, but I do have some first hand facts I could have given him if I had known he was writing the article.

ADDENDA

Bill Miner's real name was Bill Morgan. He was never a miner but a telegraph operator in his younger days. I am an old time peace officer. For a long time Miner lived half a block from me, with his sister, in Bellingham, Washington. He settled there after being released from San Quentin. He was a nice man to talk to. I have his photograph stored away in some of my papers. You know about his robbing and giving to the poor. The same can be said of Jesse James. My mother lived near them and knew them as well as Billy Stevens.

Miner's way of working was to camp near a railroad and pretend to be a wood-cutter. He would climb a telegraph pole and intercept messages. This way he kept up on what was being passed. There was $40,000 in gold being sent out from the caribou country by stage and would have been on the train at Mission Junction when the C.P.R.R. was held up if the stage had not broken down and missed connection.

Bill did not get anything out of the hold-up near Booneville. One of the brakemen wounded the man that was with Miner and Hershman. Miner tried to carry his pal away and got blood on his overcoat. I saw it later. They were supposed to be wood-cutters at that place.

Bill and his companions were traveling without horses after the hold-up at Trail, B. C. When Bill saw the officers coming, he and his men started driving some cattle. They'd probably gotten away with it had not one of them foolishly started shooting.

After the hold-up at Mission Junction, Bill went to Bay City, Michigan, where lived the girl he met when a young man. That was when he was caught and sentenced to 25 years. I was intercepting his mail—how, I will not tell. The rest of his life is too long for me to write out.

I like your magazine very much. I'm in my 85th year—hale and hearty. I do all my tractor work and take care of a few white-faced cattle. ——— J. L. Parberry, Sico, Oregon.

Looks Like Everything's Hunky-Dory!

(Continued from page 46)

sue in which it appeared, I think it would be much simpler to take each issue from the first to as far as we will go and use all stories from that issue. It is easier to keep count and your Index will work better that way. We may go bi-monthly instead of quarterly pretty soon and will rapidly use up those old issues at two issues a whack (after issue number three) and aren't we going to have one dickens of a time figuring just where to stop reprinting the old issues! After four or five issues we'll call on you for help on that score.

NOW to the few who have a complete set of TRUE WEST, I say don't buy or subscribe to OLD WEST—unless you want to start a second collection of these stories or unless you think the book plus new material is worth 50c. The book itself will generally be worth 6 to 200 times (at least in face value price) what we charge for the magazine but I still say don't buy it if you are the least bit dissatisfied with our reprinting the old articles from the early issues. Again, we are doing it because of the great number of new readers who want to read those stories and are unable to buy the original copies, or who do not want, or cannot afford, to pay what is being asked for them.

I want to make it doubly plain that there will be no condensations of books in OLD WEST. Everybody wants it *all*—and I don't blame you! That's why, now and then, we have to break an extra long book into two parts. However, this will be done very seldom.

You won't see the following in many editorials! Most magazines, and products, let it be known to their readers that they are the greatest thing on the market today. Well, once in awhile we get a sour letter. Generally, it doesn't affect us but after a long, hard day when a fellow is feeling sort of low anyhow, one of these letters gets to sounding all out of proportion, I suppose. We hadn't gotten one in about two months, but the other day I got a letter from an old fellow who said that we were going to ruin him by reprinting the old issues of TRUE WEST. He went on to accuse us of buying back copies of the originals and selling them at a profit, that we were money mad, that we wouldn't answer his letters, that our old copies weren't worth what we said they were, and everything else he could think of that was derogatory. We cancelled his subscription and told him it was as simple as that—if you don't believe in us and don't like us, for gosh sakes don't support us!

So far as I know, so help me God, we have shot utterly straight and fair with you folks from the word go. Accusations in letters like these are utterly fantastic. Most people will say I shouldn't even acknowledge that such letters exist by mentioning them in an editorial. These belittlings seem to come from the same type person and, even though they are extremely rare, when they hit you at a bad time it sort of makes you feel like you wish you were out of the business completely.

I wish those of you who feel this way would ask for a refund on your subscription immediately. Does this sound money mad? Heck fire, we are so used to running on slim rations that we wouldn't know how to operate if we really got rich! Again, we at least *think* we are completely fair and honest people and we would like to deal only with those who believe, as the old Indian prayer goes, that you should not criticize your neighbor until you have walked a mile in his moccasins.

I wonder if this is the first time in history that a publisher has actually asked certain elements of his subscribers to cancel their subscriptions?

I have succeeded again in writing a long-winded editorial. Nobody who has read the silly things before will be surprised. If I wasn't so stupid and long-winded I might could keep up with my correspondence. Actually, I get months behind and this doesn't do a thing for good will, but I've got three magazines to help get out and I try to answer every letter written me (in fact, it is a rule with the whole office and if your letter isn't answered something has gone wrong somewhere) and the task is getting pretty rough, so forgive this old worn-out windbag if you don't hear promptly. In addition to a mushrooming mail, old Hosstail ain't exactly the young colt he was when the starting gun fired.—Joe.

"Let'er Rip," Montana!

(Continued from page 27)

Marshal Jack Breen—who was big enough but not too experienced in handling toughs—deputized Frank Minteer to help him arrest the saloon keeper.

Frank Minteer was a popular rancher and riverman. He was tall and rangy. He had a crooked leg from a tussle with a wild bronc years before. Minteer was quiet, but he was hard.

By that time, 1902, the town had a jail. Minteer soon had O'Brien locked up and cooling off. O'Brien never forgot it.

There was no permanent industry to guarantee an old age for the two boom towns. They began falling apart when the railroad construction gangs left. The gamblers and their women moved to greener fields. Saloons that lined the main street were wrecked or hauled away. However, the Stockholm stood for many years. It was abandoned, though, except for a big annual celebration held there by the "Order of the Sons of Rest."

This annual dance was known as the Mulligan Ball. The mulligan was made in a wash boiler—and, some claimed, spiked with Old Crow. The revelers got ready to eat by dancing with spoons and tin cans jingling in their belts.

The last I heard of Doc Dempsey was that he committed suicide by jumping overboard from an ocean liner.

Marshal Jack Breen left the town after it began fading—I don't know where he went. But I remember one of the last things that happened before he left. He was buying a round of drinks for some prisoners before taking them to Kalispell by stage. An ex-mountie and tough character named Horse Thief Charlie lay stretched out on a bench in the saloon. Suddenly, he rolled off onto the floor, turned blue in the face, kicked a couple of times, and lay still.

"I believe Charlie's dead," somebody said.

"I can tell you how to find out," Breen remarked. "Everybody in the house belly up to the bar and have a drink on me!"

Charlie didn't move. Charlie was, of course, dead.

Later there was talk about somebody slipping the ex-mountie a little poison to keep him from testifying in a lawsuit over some water rights.

But Charlie died, and nobody seemed to mind.

CROOKED O'Brien was the last saloonman to leave. That was around 1905. Minteer had taken over as marshal. At election time, several men from Kalispell went with Minteer into Crooked O'Brien's place for a drink. As they were leaving O'Brien said, "That son-of-a-bitch we got as marshal now . . ."

Minteer whirled and pulled his gun. O'Brien grabbed a bottle and put up a fight. They wrecked the saloon. Minteer didn't shoot O'Brien, but he gunwhipped the saloon-keeper pretty bad.

Not long after that, when O'Brien had about got over his cuts and bruises, a group of men from Eureka stopped in the place for a drink. O'Brien set out a case of liquor and a box of cigars. He said, "Boys, the place is yours."

That's the way they did things in those days.

By 1906 Gateway was beginning to be a ghost town. Trade on the railroad eased off. By 1920 only three trains a week were operating. In 1933, the customs entry was shifted to Roosville. The town, whose very character had been so aptly described by the expression, "Let 'er Rip!", was dying fast.

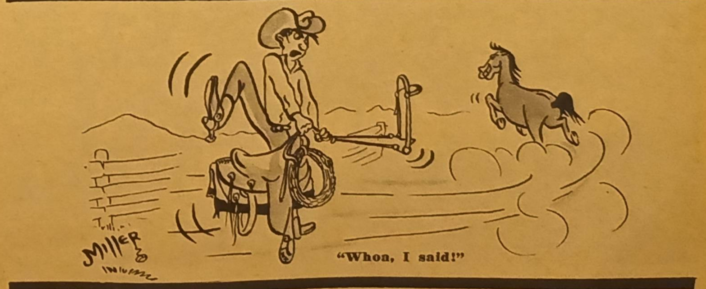
In 1936 the Great Northern pulled up its rails. Gateway and Newgate were through.

The old town of Newgate is no more, although there is a small settlement five miles north by that name.

The main street of Gateway, where half a century ago cheering crowds watched big Jack Breen race Jimmie the Nibbler toward Canada, is now part of a vast prairie. Cattle graze where the Stockholm stood.

And, the tumbleweeds roll before the breeze.

And Peerless Annie is probably dead. Times change.



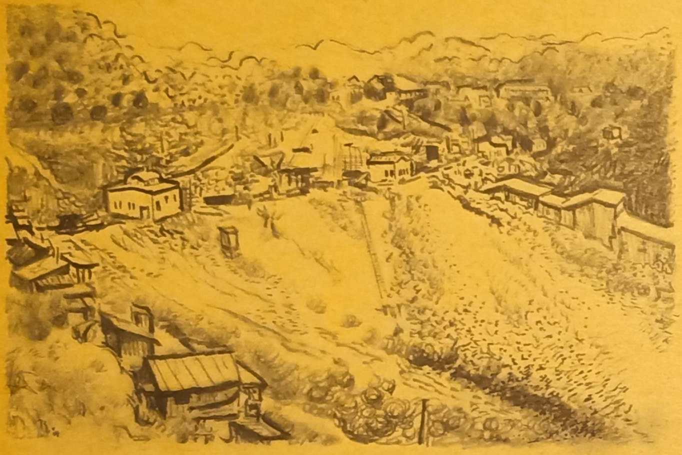
"Whoa, I said!"

OPERATION GHOST TOWN

an OLD WEST Extra

By ISABELLA CASANTAE and BILL RAKOCY

Pictures courtesy of the Authors



Above, Bill Rakocy has sketched a view of Mogollon looking toward the famous Little Fanny Mine, as it appeared about 1915. Photo below shows the old Flicker shack at Mogollon. Time, vandals, customers and floods have left their mark on the old movie house, but every board and rusted piece of tin has a story to tell.

THEY were two tired guys, edging their dusty stationwagon warily through a winding canyon along the picturesque Mogollon Mountains of New Mexico. Artists, Bill Rakocy and Chester Kwiecinski, were looking for ghost towns. A chance meeting with John Meigs, a prominent New Mexican artist and designer, resulted in his drawing an itinerary for the men pointing out what and where various ghost towns were, specifically in the Gila Wilderness Area.

At the toss of a coin, they chose a road just west of the Continental Divide, Country Route 78, a rancher's road that crossed prairie, stream, washed-out gully and over pine and scrub mountains. Mogollon was surely up ahead. Now they were apprehensive as they coaxed the wagon along a narrow dirt street which seemed to buck the intrusion of the newfangled contraptions of modern travel. Suddenly, like a vision from out of nowhere, emerged a frontier scene that belied the 20th Century and spirited them into the rugged environment of the Old West. If seeking subject matter and motivating power in painting prompted their journey, their search was over. They had found ample raw material and color.

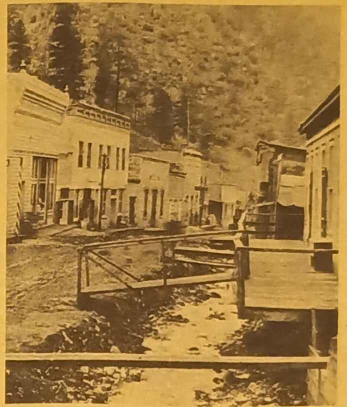
Rakocy and Kwiecinski proceeded at a snail's pace, straining to see everything at once. Along both sides of the street were remains of mining shacks, a log cabin and ramshackle storerooms of pioneers whose spirits still seemed to haunt Mogollon. Faded signs on weather-beaten buildings gave evidence of a community that once had savored much wealth, and lusty living. The Ohio artists rounded a bend in the road and jerked their wagon to a halt as they spied a white plastic sign swaying from a grey corrugated tin and wood framework shop which read ARCHER'S GHOST TOWN ART GALLERY. They thought, at first, they were seeing things. It obviously was a joke. What was an art gallery doing here in the wilderness?

But Archer's Art Gallery was no illusion or joke. Upon meeting John Archer, an accomplished artist in his own right, the men learned that Archer discovered Mogollon, fell in love with the quiet beauty of the setting, and decided to make it his painting home. What Bill and Chester didn't know then was that soon they would join a group of rugged individualists as property owners of this charming town nestled in the Mogollon Mountains, and become involved in a project dedicated to the restoration of Mogollon and who knows what else.

Mogollon is waking up. Perhaps the mines will never make another millionaire, but above the surface, in old Ben Lilly's hunting grounds, nature is just as abundant as ever

THE HISTORY of Mogollon (pronounced "muggy-own"), named by early Spanish explorers to honor Senor Don Juan Ignacio Flores Mogollon who was governor of this province of New Mexico, dates back to the turn of the 1800s. An interesting Spanish and frontier quality is etched in the few remaining buildings. In the mine tailings of the once fabulous gold and silver mines, The Little Fanny, Deep Down, Maud S, Last Chance and many others, is evidence that much history was written here.

The first pay dirt was discovered by James Cooney, an army sergeant. In 1870, Sergeant Cooney was stationed at Fort Bayard, in command of a detachment which was mapping the area. While on a scouting trip, he located a rich gold deposit on Mineral Creek. He kept the discovery a secret until his enlistment was over. Then in 1876, he returned to work the deposit. But before Cooney could realize the effect his discovery would have on the territory, he was massacred by Apache Indians in the early '80s. The miners blasted a hole in an immense boulder, deposited Cooney's body there and sealed it up. Today the site is fenced in and known as the "Cooney Tomb."



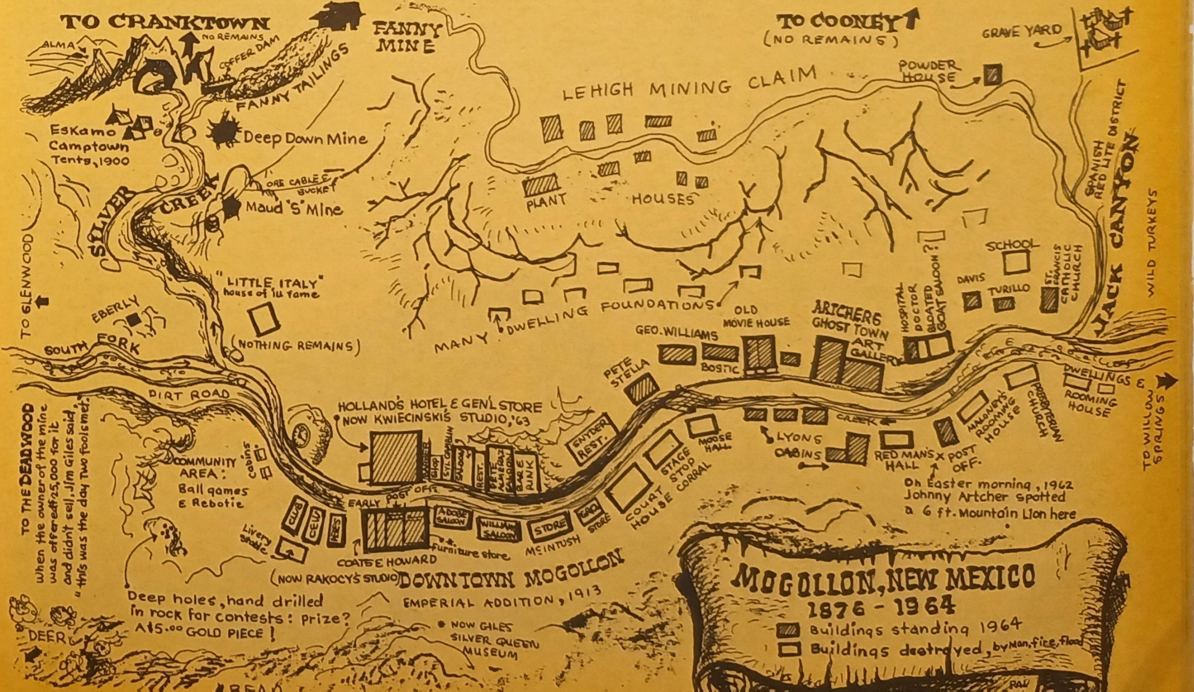
Main Street, Mogollon, New Mexico, about 1910. Good ore lies crushed and ground into the streets from lumbering wagons piled high. Mogollon saw 40 years of pay dirt production in gold and silver.

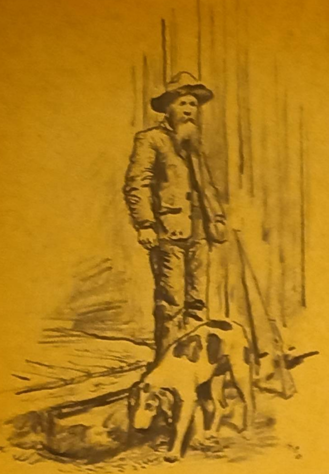
Cooney's find and the Little Fanny Mine triggered later discoveries and began an era the likes of which could never hope to be duplicated on a Hollywood movie set. By 1910 mining operations in the Mogollons were underway on a large scale, reaching their peak about 1912-1915. Tons of equipment were freighted over mountain hairpin curves to the mines and tons of gold and silver ore were carted back by wagons under most severe handicaps.

It wasn't long before Mogollon, with a population of 2,000, was booming and having growing pains, attracting camp followers of both sexes and varied characteristics, an element that brought many thorns into the community. It is estimated that during the year 1915, $150,000 worth of money orders were sold over the post office counter. Merchants of the town received approximately 60,000 tons of goods during that year.

Mogollon naturally became the target of gunslingers, desperados and other disreputable characters in the New Mexico Territory. Two brothels sprang up on either side of the town. One, "Little Italy," served the "run of mill" element, while the other run by Big Bertha was reserved for the Spanish. Legend has it that since women were scarce, the prosperous and influential men of the town eventually married many of the girls from these houses of ill fame and made them respected members of the community.

The town boasted doctors' and lawyers' offices, blacksmith shops, rooming houses and general merchandise stores which carried groceries, dry goods, tobacco, drugs and even beer, wine, and whiskey served by the clerk in a bar at the rear of the store. This was an era of primitive living where the only form of refrigeration was an occasional tunnel in a mountainside (these can be seen today where many of the buildings once stood), but where steak could be had for 10c a pound! And, of course, no history of Mo-


TO CRANKTOWN
NO REMAINS
ALMA
COFFER DAM
FANNY TAILINGS
FANNY MINE
Eskamo Camptown Tents, 1900
Deep Down Mine
ORE CABLE & BUCKET
Maud 'S' Mine
SILVER CREEK
TO GLENWOOD
"LITTLE ITALY" house of ill fame
(NOTHING REMAINS)
EBERLY
SOUTH FORK
DIRT ROAD
TO THE DEADWOOD
When the owner of the mine was offered $25,000 for it and didn't sell, Jim Giles said, "this was the day Two fools met."
COMMUNITY AREA: Ball games & Rebotie
Cabins
HOLLAND'S HOTEL & GEN'L STORE NOW KWIECINSKI'S STUDIO, '63
SHOP
SYL. CHAMPLIN
SALOON
REST.
PETE ALMERAZ
BARE RINK
SNYDER REST.
EARLY POST OFF.
CLUB
CEW
AMES
Livery Stable
ADOBE SALOON
WILLIAMS SALOON
STORE
GAR
STORE
Furniture store
MCINTUSH
COATS & HOWARD
(NOW RAKOCY'S STUDIO)
DOWNTOWN MOGOLLON
EMPERIAL ADDITION, 1913
NOW GILES SILVER QUEEN MUSEUM
Deep holes, hand drilled in rock for contests: prize? A $5.00 GOLD PIECE!
DEER
TO COONEY
(NO REMAINS)
GRAVE YARD
POWDER HOUSE
LEHIGH MINING CLAIM
PLANT
HOUSES
MANY DWELLING FOUNDATIONS
SPANISH RED LITE DISTRICT
JACK CANYON
WILD TURKEYS
SCHOOL
DAVIS
TURILLO
ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC CHURCH
HOSPITAL
DOCTOR
BLOATED GOAT SALOON ?
OLD MOVIE HOUSE
ARTCHER'S GHOST TOWN ART GALLERY
GEO. WILLIAMS
BOSTIC
PETE STELLA
CREEK
LYONS CABINS
RED MAN'S HALL
POST OFF.
MALONEY'S ROOMING HOUSE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DWELLINGS & ROOMING HOUSE
TO WILLOW SPRINGS
COURT HOUSE
STAGE STOP CORRAL
MOOSE HALL
On Easter morning, 1962 Johnny Artcher spotted a 6 ft. Mountain Lion here
MOGOLLON, NEW MEXICO
1876 - 1964
▨ Buildings standing 1964
☐ Buildings destroyed, by Man, fire, flood
RAK



Ben Lilly, the Mogollon lion hunter, and two buddies.

gollon would be complete without mentioning the saloons where old-timers gathered to rehash current events, but would clam up whenever a stranger appeared. The Bloated Goat, no longer standing, was perhaps the most famous—there gambling was fierce, a fight was the order of the day, and a man was had for breakfast every morning!

ACCORDING to H. A. Hoover, an old-timer who came to Mogollon in 1904 and for fifty years kept a diary in which he recounted intimate glimpses of people, places, and events of the past, lawlessness was so "flagrant" in the 1900s that after a stage holdup on August 9, 1910, in which a driver was killed and bullion taken off, desperate measures had to be employed.

Two Territorial Mounted Policemen were sent to Mogollon to investigate a strong suspicion that local officers were too indifferent to what was going on.

One of them, Charles Clark, who was also a saloon keeper, was shot in the old Jimmie Johnson Bar in downtown Mogollon by one of the Mounted Policemen in what the people believed to be cold-blooded murder. Many of Clark's friends, armed for revenge, placed themselves behind every window and door on the opposite side of the street, waiting for the Mounties to come into town. Hoover, Freeman, and another townsman were delegated to go down and disarm the officers, but when asked to give up their guns their reply was, "If you guys want a fight, just turn your dogs loose."

This angered the people more and just when all hell was about to break loose, Mr. Brooks, a U. S. Cattle Inspector, rode up and persuaded the two officers to leave with him. There was no question about the shooting having taken place, for the neat, round hole was in the window of Johnson's Bar for a long time before the pane was removed. After the officers left, the community settled back into its routine with nothing changed except replacement of local officers.

For a period in the late '90s Mogollon was the base of operations for Butch Cassidy and his infamous band of outlaws known as the Wild Bunch. One of Cassidy's men, a William McGinnis, passed himself off as a ranchhand and became known for his diligence and engaging personality. He later pulled off a train robbery and served time in prison. The money from the robbery was never found. After being released from prison, he invested $45,000 cash in a cattle ranch and went straight.

"I feel inclined to take off my hat to one with that kind of guts" was one of the significant remarks heard after that episode and clearly reflects the attitude of the people in those days.

Among the respected residents of Mogollon was William H. Antrim, otherwise known as Uncle Billy Antrim, the stepfather of Billy the Kid. For as long as he was a member of the community, never once could anyone ever recall his ever having mentioned Billy the Kid.

Another colorful character was Ben Lilly, a professional hunter who during his career, killed 110 lions. The cattlemen there had made up a pot, handled by Louis Jones, a local storekeeper, out of which $50 was paid for each lion hide brought in by Lilly.

One day Ben killed a female lion and upon cutting her open discovered two cubs "haired out" and "to be born soon." Ben skinned them and brought in the hides, but the cowmen declined payment. He approached Hugh McKeen, the largest individual cattle owner at that time. Hugh said that if the lion had not been killed there would have been two more and he was willing to pay his part, after which the others then agreed. As a result, Ben got $150 for that lion.

During the three-year period, Louis Jones paid Lilly a total of $5,500. Age eventually overtook the old hunter and on December 17, 1936, he died and was buried in Silver City. He was a unique character who would write a check on a cigarette paper or on a slab of wood whittled thin and smooth. These checks were not always cashed; they were unusual souvenirs from an unusual man.

MUCH TIME has elapsed since Mogollon was a thriving little mining camp. For many years it was called a ghost town because the gold mines, which at one time provided a living for over 5,000 people, shut down.

The demise of such mines as the Fanny, Deep Down, Maud S, and dozens of others was due to a myriad of circumstances ranging from men's leaving Mogollon in order to fight in World Wars I and II to the ever present encroachment of soft money. Costs have made it such that gold is not very profitable to mine anymore. Much of the "pickings" have grown thin and the ore is not as rich as it once was. Such are the cold facts that spawn ghost towns.

Nature, being stronger than the strongest of men, relentlessly reclaimed the area and for years jealously guarded it against new settlement. Currently, a new breed of man, armed with the same boldness and determination of his forefathers, but with more knowledge, better tools and direction, is trying to win the area and press it to his service. It will be an interesting struggle, and no place for comfort-loving fat-cats. Already the opportunists are gathering to watch the battle and see who emerges the victor. No one knows exactly what the stakes are, but one thing is certain, the winner will take all.

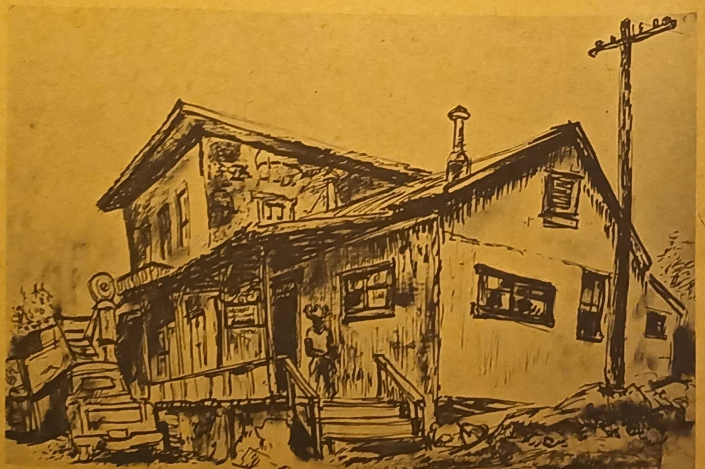
Several years have elapsed since Kwiecinski and Rakocy stumbled into Mogollon and were captivated by its beauty and possibilities. They lost no time buying into the town. Kwiecinski purchased the former Holland's Hotel and General Store while Rakocy secured the Coats & Holland Furniture Store.

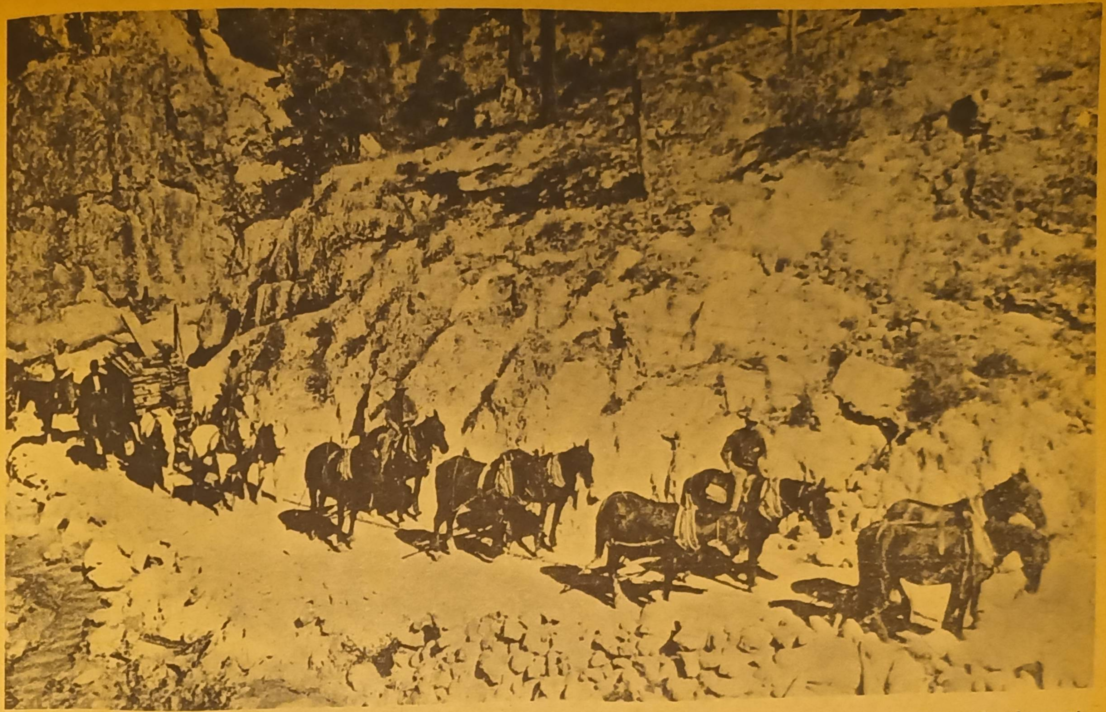
Rakocy reroofed his studio and Kwiecinski pioneered in cleaning out his well, installing a pump and building a rough hewn porch that had gone down Silver Creek in the flood of 1955. They were later joined by Jack Gerchok, and George Roebuck, other Ohio artists and writers, who also succumbed to the charms of Mogollon where they have staked a Giles claim.

Jim Giles, a Texas real estate man, also fell in love with the town while on a hunting and fishing trip to the Gila area, and has been instrumental in the town's rebirth. During the summer of 1963, Giles put his western museum, The Silver Queen, in operation and has begun to amass a good collection of historical western gear and has developed into a fair rockhound.

Opportunity also lies in neglected gold and silver mines. It is reported that a good profit can be realized in just the tailings should the price of gold rise even $2.00 an ounce. To date, ten claims have been leased at the Fanny Mine alone by optimistic businessmen.

The old telephone building, now being used as Johnny Archer's Ghost Town Art Gallery.





Chain-linked teams traveled a hairpin road into Mogollon bringing lumber, steel and cement. The first wagon trail was hacked from a rock hillside by hundreds of prisoner workmen.

THESE MEN, together with John Archer, a top-notch self-taught painter who has done much to spark the town's revival, are a rare combination of pioneer, businessman and artist. They are teaming up to bring new life back to a historic section of America that has had more than its share of beauty sleep.

But beauty is not the only asset. The area has a variety of climates. The Mogollon Mountains provide a kind of natural thermostat to control the weather. The winds blow warm from the south and give the high plateau region (4,600 feet) directly below Mogollon, spring-like temperatures in the winter.

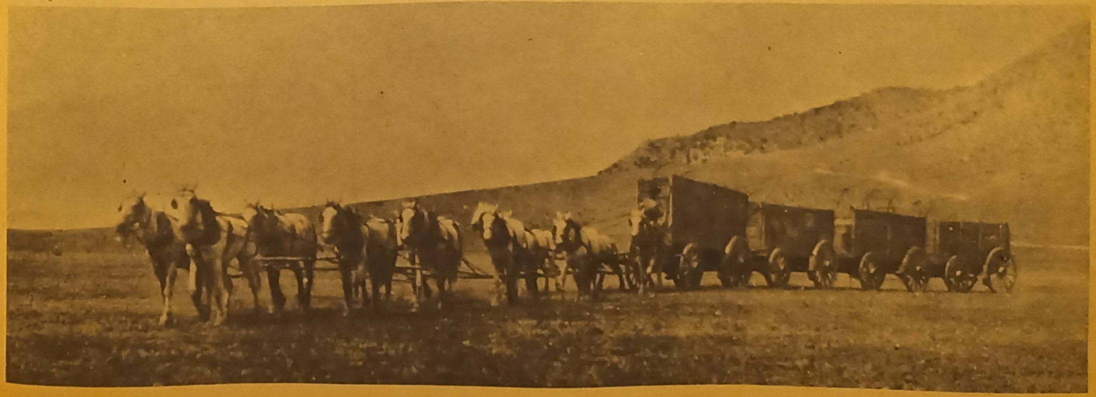
In the summer, when the plateau warms up, one can escape the heat by traveling eight miles up to Mogollon, which lies in a canyon at 7,000 feet. This condition is perfect for parents who like to see rosebushes bloom at Christmas in nearby Glenwood, as well as for their children who demanded snow in Mogollon.

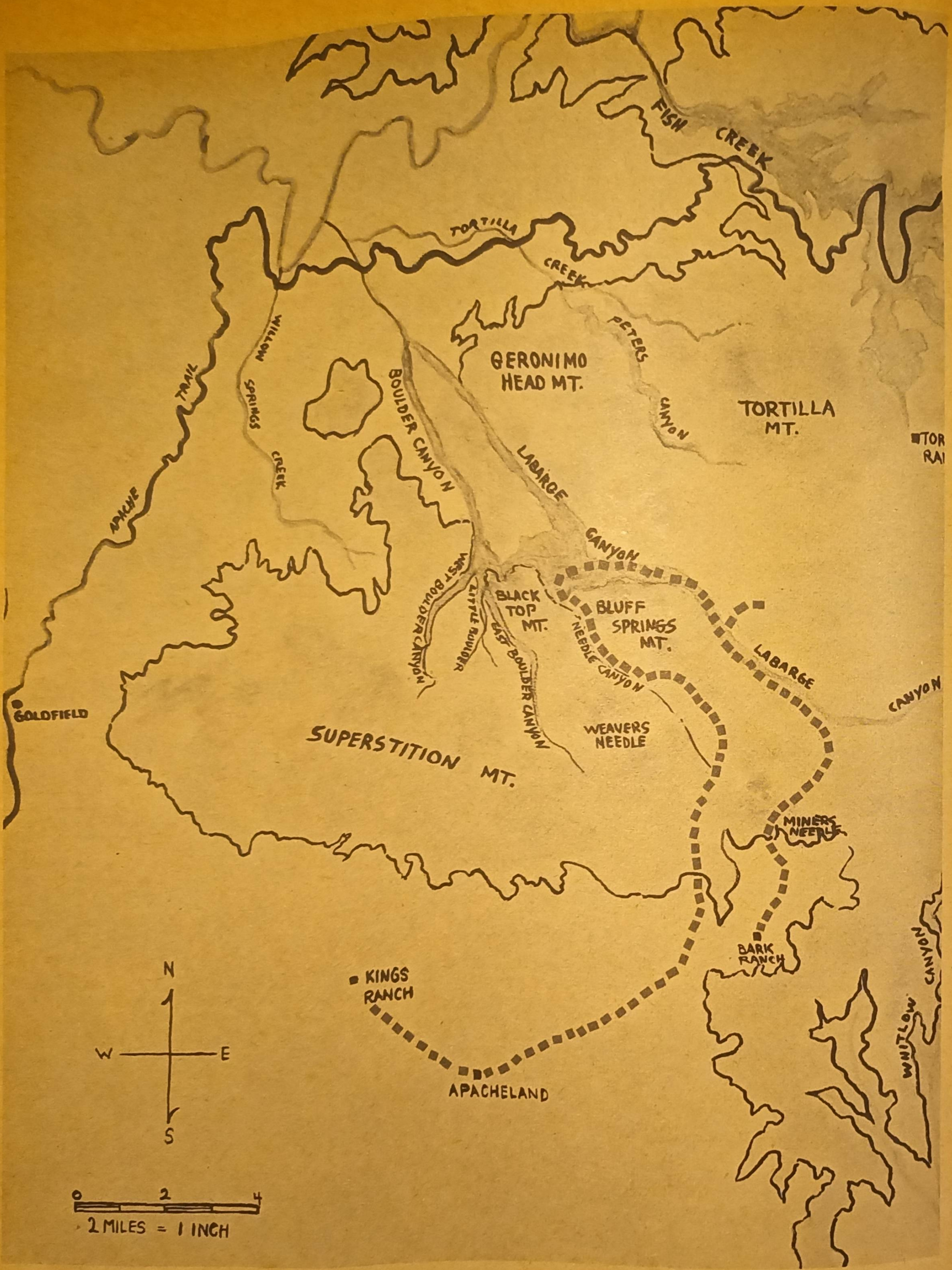
One can notice the snow getting deeper as he winds up the narrow road to Mogollon. It is a breath-taking sight to be able to stand in snow and look down 2,500 feet to a dry sunny plateau below and know that you can choose seasons at will.

The area also has adequate water. The rainfall is enough for the growth of huge pine trees on the higher slopes. The melting snows form trout streams which promise an exciting thrill for the angler. The forests are home to such animals as bear, mountain lion, elk, deer, javalina, turkey, and king size rattlers, hunting permitted.

The forest service is busily erecting campsite facilities, and reports are that an improved blacktop road will go to Mogollon. This is one of the remaining wilderness areas in the U.S.A. where one can escape the strains of the "unnatural life." Enjoy it while you can!

Teams such as these hauled hundreds of tons of ore from Mogollon to Silver City to be processed. By 1910, most of the refining of gold and silver was done in Mogollon. Today, only denuded concrete and stone foundations bear evidence of a once great mining center.





The thirty-five mile route taken on horseback to photograph Weaver's Needle and Peralta master map.

The Superstitions

(Continued from page 15)

might hit somebody trying to miss!"

Black Top Mountain lies directly north from Weaver's Needle. It was agreed that he would guide us and if we had time, we would go up on Black Top.

We met Tom early in the morning at Apacheland, where his horses are stabled. From there we rode across the desert floor to Linesba Ranch, a distance of seven miles. This part of the ride was wonderful. We were fresh, the saddles were soft, and the ground was flat. At the ranch we dismounted to check cinches and make sure all the gear was properly lashed on the mule. The Linesba cattle trail took us into the mountains. After a few minutes on this trail, we all wished we were back at King's Ranch drinking coffee on the patio. The trail was very steep, narrow and rocky. This ride is not one for tenderfeet such as we. Only people who have worked cattle in this terrain can appreciate the fear we began to feel. But the horses were excellent mountain beasts and were quite deliberate where they placed their hoofs, watching for loose stones that might roll with them and with us. I am sure had we been astride horses from the flatlands of Texas, we would all be at the bottom of a canyon now.

Tom had brought along Blackie Gross, seventy-one years young. His saddle was engraved "Champion All Around Cowboy, Tucson, 1954." That made some of us wonder if our tender ages of mid-twenties and thirties would be good enough to maintain the pace. Blackie was riding a spirited animal that he claimed was the most surefooted of any he had ever owned. After a couple of hours on the trail, we were all in agreement with Blackie, for he rode on the trail, off either side, urging us on, his horse often sliding all four feet in order to maintain its balance.

There were three hours of holding our breath and trying to find a soft spot on the saddle as we ascended Bluff Springs Mountain and made our way down into Needle Canyon. This is on the east side of Weaver's Needle. From this point the Needle is not one shaft of stone pointing skyward as is usually seen, but three separate giant spikes looking much like a trio of tepees from an ant's point of view.

During a ten-minute "water and get the kinks out break," we photographed the Needle from an angle few people get to see. The spire had recently claimed another victim. Vance Bacon, a mining surveyor, fell to his death from the uppermost peak, thus adding kindling to the legends of the mountains. Most of the *accidents* or fatal misfortunes have happened in a close proximity to the Needle. It is an extremely rugged area, and one that tells a tenderfoot or experienced hiker, "Beware. Danger. Proceed at your own risk." It is not written anywhere, but you can feel it in the air. From the time we had the Needle in view, we felt as though a dozen pair of eyes were on us, watching our every move. It was somewhat reassuring to look around me and see eight other people with the same thoughts crossing their minds, and knowing they were friends, well armed, and able to protect themselves.

Our ten minutes up, we headed down the trail where Tom had told us there was good water. Our canteens were considerably lighter for the heat and dusty trail had produced an unquenchable thirst in all of us. Had the trail been enough to gallop our horses, I am sure we would have raced to the waterhole.

Blackie Gross and Darlene on Linesba cattle trail cross Bluff Springs Mountain.

Eberhard, Ed, Don, Darlene, Bernice, Jack and Karl. Modes of travel utilized included Volkswagen buses, Honda trail machines (and fourteen good legs when motorized travel became impossible!)

WE WERE descending a steep part of the trail when tragedy almost struck. To the right, the mountain rose abruptly and to our left it fell away to a canyon bed some 1,000 feet below. The horses were having trouble keeping their footing on the loose rock and shale. Suddenly there was a place in the trail where the horses had to step off a three-foot boulder. The first two horses made it fine and it was my turn to follow the leader.

My horse stopped at the boulder, hesitated a moment, shifted her weight from one foot to the other as if trying to decide how she should make the drop. Finally, she stepped down with both forefeet. I had not noticed that one of the horse's hoofs touched a loose rock, which rolled in under her, buckling her legs. She fell to her knees and in toward the rising mountain on our right. My right leg was caught between the horse and the mountain. At this moment, completely off balance, the horse floundered to regain its footing. I was pitched head over heels over her neck. When I quit rolling, I tried to help the horse regain her footing so she wouldn't roll down the slope to the canyon below.

I could find no broken bones and all of me seemed to be functioning. Then I happened to think, "What if the horse had fallen to the left instead of the right!" I thanked God and climbed back into the saddle.

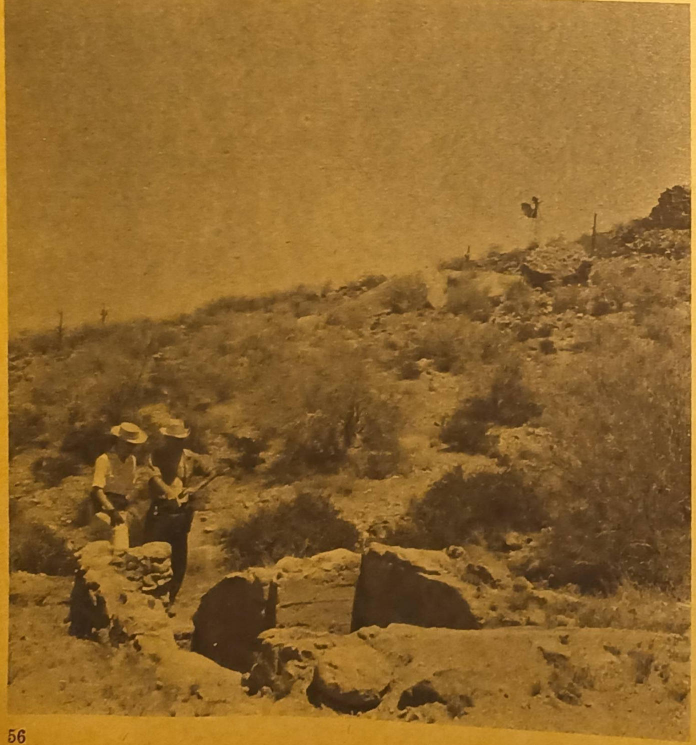
I thought I knew exactly how this country would look from the interior region. I had my mountains placed right, but the canyons had me puzzled. Two years before we had climbed the Dons Trail, at the south end of Superstition Mountain, to get a view of Weaver's Needle, Black Top Mountain, Bluff Springs and canyons that we had memorized from maps. The Dons Trail starts in Peralta Canyon, and at that time represented a two-hour climb. This year we found that the Forestry Service had put in a wide new trail that could be hiked in half the original time. From the Dons Trail you are unable to see Weaver's Needle until the last fifteen feet of the climb. Then it emerges over the horizon of the pass, every step bringing a better view.

It is a deceptive but beautiful panorama. The mountains look tall and the canyons deep. The bottom of Needle Canyon looked so deep and narrow it seemed at the time to resemble a thin silver ribbon separating Black Top Mountain and Bluff Springs Mountains. Later I was amazed to find how shallow Needle Canyon really is, and what little time it takes to travel the length of it.

Black Top Mountain was very small. We could have been to the top of it in thirty minutes to photograph the set of Spanish symbols that is carved on the southeast corner. I have seen pictures and sketches of these symbols. They match to a degree the ones we had seen earlier in Hieroglyphic Canyon. (The sunburst symbol with the word, oro, beside it and a Spanish land measure sign meaning fifty varas—33 1/3 inches to a vara.) There is also a small map that no one can decipher. I have heard there is a snake sign pointing straight down.

Knowing this, we were not surprised to see an excavation exactly below the region of the secret signs. Someone has made a tunnel that could be used as a subway from the size of it. It was located about 150 feet, approximately 50 varas, below the rock carvings.

Fish Creek Hill is a breathtaking highlight of the drive over the Apache Trail. The road drops from this high point, taking only a matter of a few moments to reach the floor of the canyon below. Fish Creek can be seen to the left of the Apache Trail.



Joe Kelly, prospector and friend, relates the history of the old Doc Palmer Mine. It is located on the northwest slope of Superstition Mountain. Joe is telling Bernice about the ruins of the Palmer Mine powder house where the explosives were kept.

I tore my gaze from Black Top to scan the sides of Needle Canyon for other signs. I had read of a rock marker that had been erected by the Indians to put a blood curse on any white man who dared trespass on their land. I was so busy looking for this alleged "curse" that I was not keeping an eye on the trail. Without warning, I felt my right boot catch on something. It was holding fast. I was being dragged out of the saddle by a metal survey marker which had caught in the rawhide laces of my boot.

I kicked my other foot free of the stirrup and was turned around in midair facing the direction from whence we had just come. My horse gone from under me, I hung like a kite tied to the ground by the marker. I felt sure I had cracked a rib or so, as my back had landed on a sharp rock that tried to find its way through my rib cage. After two falls, I decided that "The Indian Gods in Charge of Curses" had kept busy hanging on my shirt-tail the entire trip.

WE STOPPED for water near the junction of Bluff Springs and Needle Canyon. I looked back for a brief glimpse of Weaver's Needle; it now wore the face of the Needle I recognized—a singular spire of granite thrust up out of the earth to stand majestically tall; a lonely sentinel, looking as though it has taken upon itself all the sorrow it has had to witness since the day it was created.

There is a large cave on the Bluff Springs side of Needle Canyon. It is thought by some to be the cave the Dutchman spoke of when he said, "Across from my mine is my cave." His mine was in a canyon running north and south as does Needle Canyon. That would place his mine on Black Top Mountain which is directly across from the cave. I personally do not think his mine is in this part of the Superstitions. Every rock has been turned over three times in the last sixty years. If it is ever found it will be in a more easterly part of the wilderness.

We turned into La Barge Canyon toward Charlebois Spring where, after riding six and a half hours, we were going to stop, rest and eat. On the way to the spring, we passed several deserted camps where gold seekers had spent their time and energy digging in the mountains.

The rest stop passed all too quickly, for Charlebois is a beautiful spot—green trees, flat ground and a bubbling spring of clear, cold water. Each of us drank our canteens to the bottom twice. Finally, we were ready to continue up La Barge Canyon to photograph the Peralta master map.

After riding about three miles, Tom said quite casually, "There's your master map." It is on the left-hand side of the canyon going south, a wall of rock that is very flat and the color of burnt toast. The map is etched deep into the rock and is supposed to be the key to the Peralta Mines.

It is said there are eight or eighteen mines. If you can unscramble this map, all their wealth is yours. It is hard to understand why the map was put here. There is no water, and no place for a camp—just a narrow ravine with a sandy creek bed.

Our thoughts have worked overtime trying to figure this riddle. Did the map maker draw from memory, or was he looking around at the landmarks from this spot and etching it as it was? The Peraltas were known to use La Barge Canyon as an entrance into the mountains. Here again, as in Hieroglyphic Canyon, the map was put in a spot where it could not possibly be missed. The canyon narrows to a mere eighteen feet at this particular spot. Weary and saddle sore, we joyfully unpacked our cameras and measuring instruments. The opportunity to document the authentic route to the now hidden Peralta Gold Mines was ours.

When we started out of the mountains, it was getting late and the ride back was long and hard. Tom and Blackie decided to take us to the old Jim Bark Ranch, now called the Quarter Circle U. It was closer, and time was of the essence. The trail became bone jarring, and we found ourselves standing up in the stirrups or holding our weight off the saddle by leaning heavily on the saddle horn. I am sure it must have been amusing to the cowboy guides to watch our agonizing efforts.

There were no water breaks on the way back. It was either drink while at a half-trot or do without. We came out of the mountains over a rock pinnacle called Miners' Needle. The shortest route to the ranch was straight down, so down we went. This entailed the most tedious riding we had ever done. The horses were in a vertical position most of the time. In order to stay in the saddle, our backs and the horses' rumps would touch. It took us forty-five minutes to descend the rocky butte, and we were fortunate to get down without further mishap.

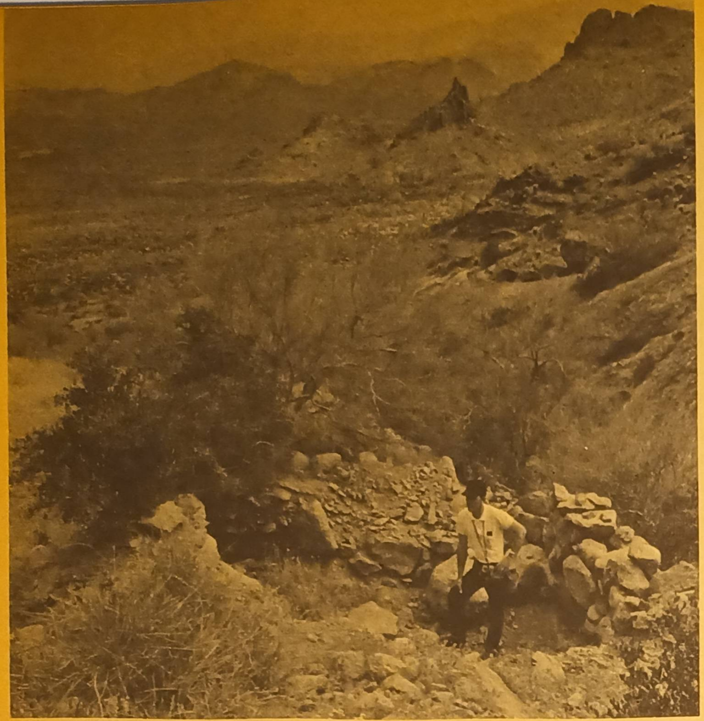
Once on the valley floor, another three miles brought us to the vacant Quarter Circle U Ranch where there was plenty of water and a nice, hard front porch to lie upon. By this time it was 7:30 p.m.; the corral at Apacheland was still ten to twelve miles away. Leaving us at the deserted ranch our guides rode in darkness to Apacheland. I know the seven of us did not move during the three hours it took for them to return with our bus. Lying there in the dark, we could hear a tremendous booming sound coming from the mountain's interior. It sounded, on this last night in Arizona, like the Thunder Gods bidding us farewell and inviting us to return as their welcome guests. We had kept a pledge not to desecrate or disturb the sacred ground of civilizations past. We had been allowed to see and to learn more than most; yet the amount of knowledge attained is like a speck of sand to the desert. This expedition was at its end and we realized our quest for knowledge had only been whetted.

UPON OUR arrival home, our work began anew. Notebooks were filled with everyday travels, descriptions, directions, measurements and historical data. Maps were reworked to show new roads and old trails not shown on present maps. Familiar voices spoke again to us from the recorder, repeating history and stories both amusing and tragic. We kept a written diary as well as a diary on tape. Cans and boxes of film had to be processed.

Detailed reports were made for the Arizona State Department of Library and Archives whose personnel were of tremendous help to us. Plans are now being made to try once again to conquer the Superstitions. She has hidden her treasures well. Her cliff dwellings, secret symbols and maps, her wealth of lost gold and silver, are all well protected within the circle of mountains.

The Indians were the first to take the land and live upon its bountiful re-

(Left to right) Bernice, Karl, Darlene, Ed, Don and Eberhard. The expedition group are at the Black Queen claim area where the Dutchman was known to have filed a claim, prior to the discovery of the Morman stope and the Goldfield era.



Jack standing beside ruins of Silverlock's house on massacre grounds. In 1916, Silverlocke found a leather pouch containing $18,000 in gold evidently dropped during the Peralta massacre. After spending his entire fortune hiring men to dig on the massacre grounds in a fruitless search for more of the gold, Silverlocke killed himself.

sources. Archaeologists are still searching for the reasons of their unexplained flight and extinction. Next came the Spaniards, Jesuits and the Mexican miners to strip her of gold and silver. They met disaster at the hands of the Apaches. The white man has fared no better, tragedy befalling most. The list of men who have died in these mountains number into the hundreds. Perhaps one day someone who "gives" something to the mountains instead of "taking" will be the one to whom she will divulge her secrets.

We have been asked many times, "Why is this mountain named Superstition?" Thousands of people each year travel along the southern part of the Superstitions. Signs along the way point out Superstition Mountain. A strange and mysterious sounding name! Many people think the name has a connection with Jacob Walzer and his Lost Dutchman Mine but, in our opinion, this is completely untrue.

It was named such because of what was thought to be an Indian superstition about the mountain, a poor selection of a word used to depict this holy place of the Pimas. It is a slap in the face to their religion, for "superstition" translates as: belief and veneration of things which are not proper objects of worship, or article of faith based on ignorance of, or an unworthy idea regarding, the Supreme Being.

After learning the Pima Indian beliefs concerning Kakandaku Navangu (Crooked Mountain), it was as though we had never really seen the mountain before, although we had observed and walked upon it many times. Their story of how the top of Superstition Mountain was formed can only be compared with our own Biblical story in the book of Genesis, when the earth was covered with water.

Their religious songs have been handed down through generations, as the Indian did not leave any written text. The coming of the flood and the fate of their Pima ancestors is told beautifully in the form of chants. They describe in detail the unusual and unique appearance of Crooked Mountain. The flood songs from the Earth Doctor first gives the warning of the coming disaster.

Weep, my unfortunate people!
All this you will see take place.
Weep, my unfortunate people!
For the waters will cover the land.
Weep, my unhappy relatives!
You will learn all.
The waters will cover the mountains.

Now when looking at the mountain, we can visualize the trails of people making a panicked ascent up all sides to reach the uppermost peaks. Fathers and mothers, clutching their children, the young helping the old, the strong aiding the weak. The efforts made to escape their doom is part of the song.

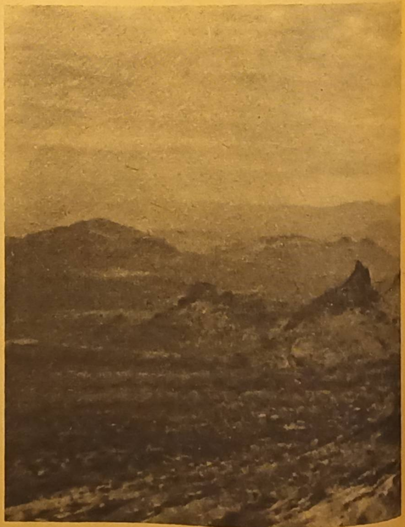
Haiya! (Aha) Haiya! Flood! Flood!
Haiya!
See the doom awaiting them!
Haiya! Haiya! Flood! Flood! Haiya!
Here are my doomed people before me.

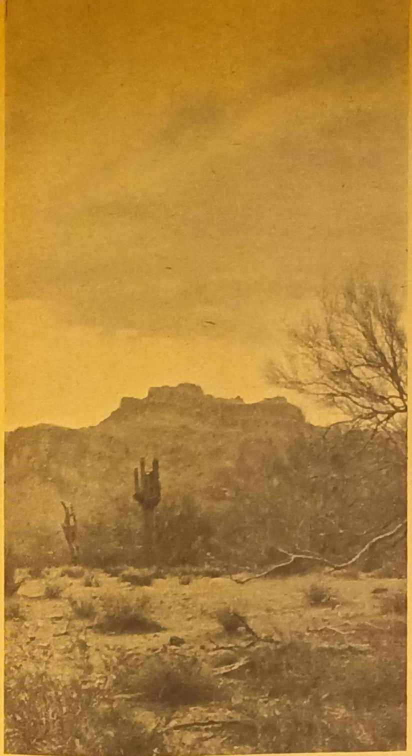
While waiting on top of the mountain the flood songs, by South Doctor, tell of the frantic try made by Nasi (Pima Magician) to stop the rising crest.

The waters dissolve the land!

The waters dissolve the land!
The Mighty Magician tests His
strength.
The waters dissolve the mountains!
The waters dissolve the mountains!
Nasi forsees what is coming.
On Crooked Mountain I am standing.
Trying to disperse the waters.
On Crooked Mountain I am standing.
Trying to disperse the waters.

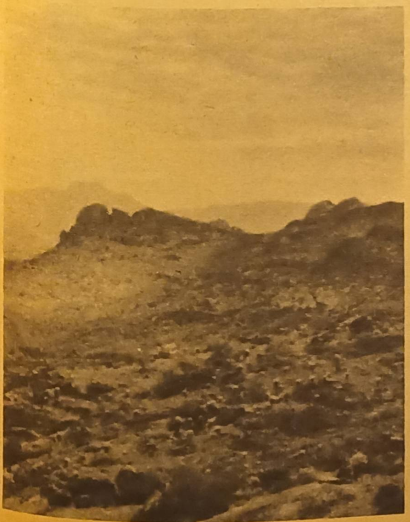
The last stanza explains the figures of stone you can see to this day along the highest ridges of "The Crooked Kind of Mountain" (Kakanda Ku Tatavang).





Powerless! Powerless!
Powerless is my magic crystal.
Powerless! Powerless!
I shall become as stone.

One needs no special kind of imagination to see the huddled masses of people. An artist could not have sculped these graves of stone to better express the grief, astonishment and quiet submissiveness in the scene that Nature has portrayed. On closer observation, you can see children, their small arms clinging to their elders' knees in fright. Some heads are bent in prayer, while others are standing erect and proud taking one last look at their homeland. They are there for all to see!



Center picture shows view of the west side of Superstition Mountain. Prominent is the "ship's prow" on the mountaintop. Above is shown the monument at Apache Junction, erected by the Dons Club in memory of Jacob von Walzer, "The Dutchman." Below, in an unmarked corner of the Phoenix, Arizona, city cemetery, is the site of the Dutchman's grave.

CROOKED MOUNTAIN is also used in their festival, war, medicine and game songs. One of the game songs describe the white waterline that runs along the crest called the seaform line.

THE GAME SONG

Here on the slopes of Crooked
Mountain,
Here on the slopes of Crooked
Mountain,
Around whose crest the foam remains,
We have run for blue water.

THE FESTIVAL SONG

From the Superstition Mountain rose
the eagle,
From the sluggish moving gila rose
the hawk.
Ma-Akahi talked with the eagle, then
arose, grasped his shield, and went
his way.
Hivayomi talked with the hawk and
then arose, grasped his club, and
journeyed forth.

On this site 400 miners were slaughtered by the Apaches in 1848, in their attempt to return to Mexico. The Peralta family in 1847 had sent them to mine as much gold as possible before the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which would make this land United States soil.

THE WAR SONG

There arose in the east land,
One whom I met there smoking
Flowerlike cigarettes
Running dazed and falsely speaking,
Pitiable and faint-hearted.
I feel at Crooked Mountain
There I am going, there I am going.
I have to drink the liquor
That makes me stagger as I run.

The last song is one that perhaps explains the puzzling actions of the Indian who will not walk in the shadow of Crooked Mountain. The seventh stanza of the Badger Song is one of the Pima medicine songs.

The shadow of Crooked Mountain
The curved and pointed shadow
T'was there that I heard the singing!
Heard the song that harmed my
heart.

THIS I believe to be the key as to why the name Superstition was given to Crooked Mountain. In the early 1900s, my father saw the Indians coming from the west, traveling toward Superstition Mountain in their springboard wagons. They were going to gather greasewood to take back to their villages for fuel. They could have used the Apache Trail which was a dirt road at that time, but it was too near the mountain and would lie in its shadow at times. The Indians would drive their wagons out into the desert to not risk trespassing in the shadow of Crooked Mountain.

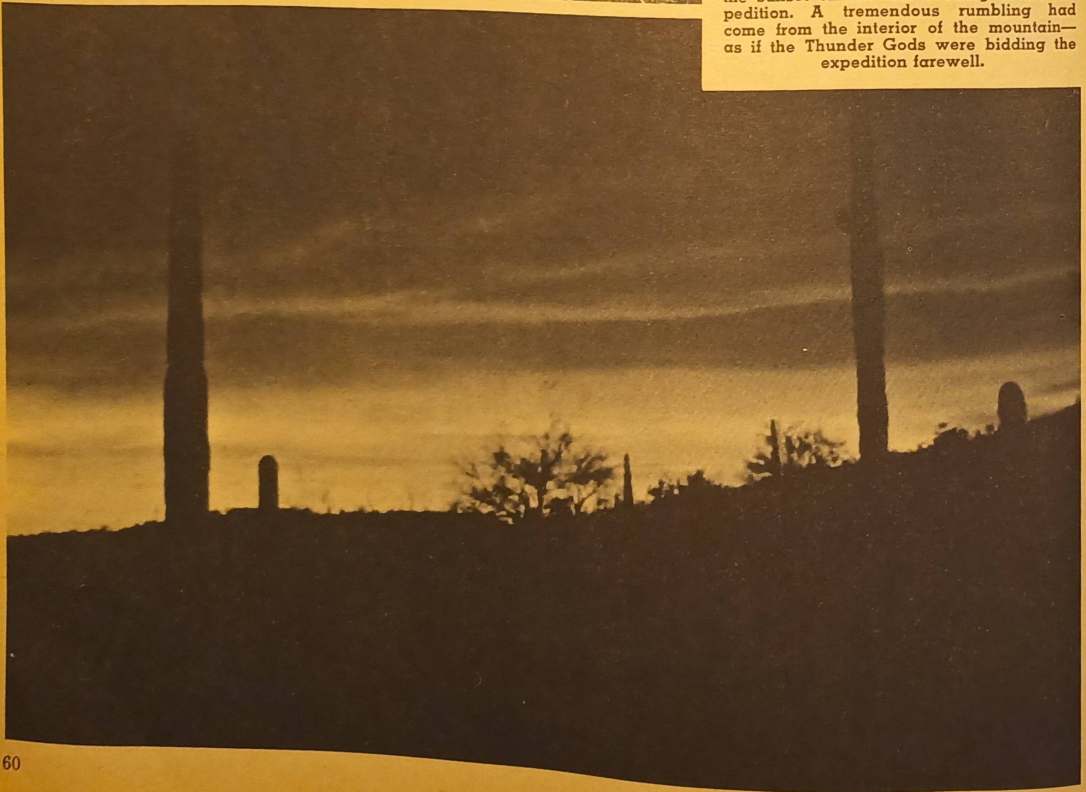
Many of the legends of the Pimas are connected with the area. The stone they used to make their axes was called "Hatovik." There is a large quantity of this stone found along the Salt River which lies north of Superstition Mountain. Some of the Pimas say that the stone was not of this earth, but was brought by the Nether People when Elder Brother led them up from the underworld to conquer those then living on the earth.

The Pima houses were built with their doors facing east toward the Superstitions so the early-rising Pimas may pay their respects to the sun as it rises over Tortilla Mountain, one of the highest peaks.

Is it any wonder that the Pimas hold this land in reverence? How much money has been spent in just our lifetime by organizations searching the face of the earth for Noah's Ark? Think of the homage that would be paid this mute proof of the flood. It strikes me as being rather strange that the Indian has a similar story coinciding with our own faith. They knew of the coming of the waters just as Noah knew—the difference being, the Pimas had no ark but fled to their Crooked Mountain, there to be turned into a pillar of stone.

If you ever pass Superstition Mountain in your travels, look to the lofty peaks and there on the horizon you will see the so far untouched, unspoiled panorama of the Shrine on Superstition Mountain.

At right, 250-year-old Saguaro cacti point the way to Hieroglyphic Canyon. Below, the sunset on the last evening of the expedition. A tremendous rumbling had come from the interior of the mountain—as if the Thunder Gods were bidding the expedition farewell.



OLD WEST LETTERS

Dear Joe:

Congratulations on OLD WEST are not enough. All of us who are interested in true stories of the West should tell you that we think you have tied onto a wonderful idea. But I'll be durned if I can see how you can do it for a measly four bits. You probably know what you're doing, but without advertising, I can't figure how you'll bring in the bacon and the beans. You're on the right trail and I say, "More power to you!"—Tumbleweed Tom Moss, 14514 South Normandie, Gardena, California.

We can make it by you guys cleaning us off the stands every issue. We may run some advertising later but not much.

Dear Mr. Small:

What do you mean by pulling such a sneaky? There I was, nosing around the newsstand, when I glanced up and saw this title, OLD WEST. "Well," I thought, "that's getting just a little too close to TRUE WEST. Everybody is trying to be a copycat." Then, how my mouth did fly open and my eyes bug out when I read "Published by TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES." "Why," I exclaimed as everybody turned around to see just who the loudmouth was, "that's one of Joe Small's magazines!"

Not a word did you mention in any of your previous publications. And nothing was said about how we could subscribe to it along with your other wonderful magazines. How do you expect people to buy it when you don't advertise it? If I had known Joe Small had another magazine out (even if it had been on the Art of Trash Collecting), I'd have hotfooted it down to the nearest magazine rack and plunked down my 50c without hesitation.

You know I'm jesting in the above needling. And I'm just as tickled as an Indian with his feathers on upside down to see that you're publishing even more fascinating facts about the West.

In your daily task of trying to please all us readers, you're more than likely rushing yourself faster to ulcers. It's easy for us to buy a magazine and sit down in an easy chair and read it. Too often we fail to think of all the man-hours that go into the preparation. So I'd just like to say "Thanks" and go take a vacation!—Mrs. Gene Maas, 113 Hillside, Topeka, Kansas.

We're fffffine! Don't bbbother us nonesoever. Do it between our paperdoll work which also keeps us busy. Nurse says time for more paper work. Bye!—Jjjjjoe.

Dear Sir:

I am in favor of ALL new stories, add the old book, and give us something new to collect. Of course, I am prejudiced as I have a complete set of both TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES. They are interesting enough that I sometimes go back and get a volume and read them all over again, especially when a mention is made of something that has been printed before.—W. H. Swingle, Route 1, Box 471K, El Paso, Texas.

Dear Joe Small:

What ails you? Any pea-picking man would know without asking that an old subscriber to TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES would not want to miss another true story such as "Nine Years Among the Indians" regardless of which magazine you choose to cover such contents! And if you have access to other such treasures, rare old issues or otherwise, please open up that vault and make good by getting some into print, so that your subscribers may share further in such future adventures.

Since you expressed your willingness to take anything in payment for my copy, I'm tempted to take you up on it and send not only my mother-in-law but my wife and mother also. Maybe then I could be the *first* to read my Western Publications magazines instead of running second and third (more often third!) as is now the case. But as you can see, I've decided against such a disastrous mistake and enclose five thin and worn dimes instead.

Thank you, good luck and hurry up with those promised treasures.—Walter L. Britt, 75 Zampa Lane, San Francisco, California.

Dear Sir:

I enjoy your new magazine, OLD WEST, very much. I would like to see you start with Volume 1, Number 1 of TRUE WEST or FRONTIER TIMES. take out the advertising, print a rare old book, boost the size of the magazine from 72 to 96 pages, and still have room for two or three long new features or eight to twelve shorter new features. I would be very interested to know if you could go back to the very first issue of FRONTIER TIMES, leave out the advertising, of course, and reprint it and other early issues of FRONTIER TIMES? Besides. of course, reprinting the early issues of TRUE WEST.—The W. E. Nabers', 2211 Elton Avenue, Bakersfield, California.

We'd better wait on FRONTIER TIMES. Too many readers have full sets.

Dear Sir:

I have just finished reading the first edition of OLD WEST. This is the best magazine I have read in a long time. I have bought TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES and neither of these measures up to OLD WEST.

All of the articles held my interest up to the last word, in each of the writings. I sure hope you can continue to produce as great a magazine in the future. I liked the story about Big Foot Wallace. along with the stories, "The Haunted Corral" and "The Honor of Old Thunder."

One more thing I like in your magazine is that there isn't any advertising to clutter up the stories by breaking them up too much. It is more pleasant to read without advertising all over the issue.

Thank you for putting such a good magazine out for the public to read and enjoy in the coming years. Good luck in the future publishing of this wonderful magazine.—Gary Moe, Route 4, Box 180, Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

Dear Joe:

If you reprint the old issues of TRUE WEST you're an "Injun giver." Many people, including myself, have worked for years to collect these old copies which you have been "yammering" at us in every issue would be valuable. NOW what you propose in OLD WEST is to make our prized copies worth just 50c a copy.

I have a complete file of both magazines and in their bound covers, which cost me $3 each, they make a lovely and, up to now, a valuable collection. I also have the Index and am waiting patiently for the new one that will bring us up to date.

Give us your Number 2 plan and I promise to be a collector of OLD WEST also.

There are several sets of TRUE WEST in Tulsa and believe me we are all squalling like a pig with his head caught in the rail fence.

Still say "our" magazines are the best Westerns ever published.—Olevia E. Myers, 1503 West 37 Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

No, No, NO, Olevia! If our reprinting of TRUE WEST *in this particular form* brings down the value of your original collection even one penny, I'll fight a mad bear with a crooked stick in a public arena! That's why we have refused to reprint *as is* for years—our collector friends would have our hides before dark. Not *one* professional collector (and we have thousands) has objected. Why? This is a new magazine reprinting an old issue, plus a rare old book, plus one or more new features. *You can't have an original if you alter it in any way!* Fact is. collectors are now starting on OLD WEST, buying extra copies for you'd be surprised how many sets! Again not *one* of them has objected. See Jerry Buckhead's letter which follows.—Joe.

Dear Hosstail:

I just bought and read No. 1 OLD WEST. You asked for comments so here are mine:

1. The idea of reprinting the front cover, without overprints, on the rear is fine for those few heretics who would destroy their magazine after reading it. I think an even better idea would be to print up a few thousand extra covers every issue (minus overprints) and sell them for a nominal fee.
2. I would like to see a reprint of each old issue, including letters from readers. As you mention, an old book added to each issue instead of the old ads would be a good bonus.

Good luck with your mags. You print 'em and I'll collect 'em. I am one of the lucky few to have a complete collection of TRUE WEST and am missing only No. 1 FRONTIER TIMES. It doesn't hurt me a bit for you to reprint the old issues with a new name and cover.—Jerry Buckhead, 7525 Baltic, San Diego, California.

Dear Pat Wagner:

I just finished reading OLD WEST from cover to cover and please keep this magazine coming! It is certainly worth many times over the value of the sales price.

For all the books I put my savings in, I can honestly say that my best investment was when listening to the advice of my younger brother to buy this issue of OLD WEST. He wanted to read it, not I, and after he finished it told me to read it and especially the one story, "Haunted Corral" by A. Kinney Griffith.

The clarity and frankness of the story and the style of this author is very pleasing. I wish that more stories or tales of this author would be written and published. I'd like to see more of his work in your future issues.

Too many magazines are just crammed with worthless, time-wasting stories and articles but not yours and I respect the conscientious effort that you and your staff continually enforce. The result is a high-grade, well-worth-the-money magazine.—Lucy Belandres, 1684 East A Street, Brawley, California.

Kinney will be in the next issue. We think he's good, too, but don't tell him. Durned rapscallion might start sending his stuff to *good* magazines!—Joe.

Gentlemen:

Just a note to congratulate you folks on another fine magazine.

About a reprint on back issues, I say no because these people have saved up their books and you just might get strung up. But you could feature some of the old stories once in awhile in the new magazine. Your idea of the old book is good, for any time you run a story like "Big Foot Wallace" I am sure you will sell out. So keep up the good work. You all are doing a wonderful job. I love all your magazines.—Mrs. Gerald Followwill, 125 S.E. 57, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Joe:

Enclosed please find $1.00 to cover cost of OLD WEST (2 copies). I believe this to be a very good idea, especially the printing of out of print books. I am looking forward to receiving these copies so how about shooting them back by return mail.

In the ten years I have been collecting your "rags," I have been more than pleased with the standards you have maintained and the quality of material you have printed. I hope, especially since you have grown so much, that you don't lose the personal touch that has been so evident in all of your editorials. Please see that your readers, such as myself, can write W. P. and feel as though they are writing an old friend and not a large, impersonal business.

Wishing you complete success with the new magazine.—Vernon E. McComb, 8535 Kavanaugh Road. Baltimore, Maryland.

Vernon, the more money you folks send in, the friendlier I get. Besides, I'm not smart enough to be "stuck up." The greatest compliment I ever received was made by Dr. Walter Prescott Webb who, in a conversation with Dr. Joe Frantz, said, "If old Joe ever becomes a millionaire publisher, he'll still have cow dung on his boots!"—Joe.

Dear Sir:

I'm writing to let you know that my husband and I like OLD WEST very much and I don't think anyone who publishes TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES needs to be told how to make a book better. They're all just perfect and please, if possible, reprint all the rare old issues you can. Reading is the only form of enjoyment we can afford with a family of eight and the children all read them or have the older ones read to them. We keep all copies and I buy the back issues when you put them in package deals. Please continue the good work. There are imitations out but look inside and you can see the difference.—Mrs. Marvin Parker, 1855 Branciforte Drive, Santa Cruz, California.

Dear Sir:

As far as I'm concerned, you can do no wrong. I love *everything* you publish —I wish you had ten magazines on the stands! Those rare old books are wonderful; keep on publishing them. And the treasure stories and the Indian stories and the cavalry stories, etc., etc. Don't change a thing. Just keep on getting bigger and better.—Mrs. J. D. Quaranto, 4517 State Street, Abilene, Texas.

Some of you bushwhackers are going to accuse us low-down, sneakin' coyotes of publishing only the good letters. You'll be able to tell real soon—a rag without advertising has *got* to be liked! If we fold with the second or third issue, you'll know we were lyin' through our Brown Mule stained teeth!—Joe.

Dear Sir:

I've been intending to write to you for years but never got to it. This time you told me to. You wanted opinions from readers about the new magazine. I say go ahead with it. But can't you make it more often than a quarterly?

(Note: From the hospital bed I dictate this to my secretary who is on crutches. Joe says hello from the insane asylum. Give us a little time and more staff and we'll try! Signed: Exhausted.)

I was very pleased with the pilot issue. It was like home. The Painted Cave and Haunted Corral—I ranged that country for several years. I knew Jo Flieger and some of the other people mentioned in the story.

Was also very interested in "Big Foot Wallace." I have heard my father speak of him. I went to school in Austin and ranged all around that country during vacations. I've ridden about every trail from San Antonio to Spokane and back again. And as my father used to say. "I don't know how I'm a-livin' today."—Leo E. Broadstreet, Box 94, Columbus, New Mexico.

Dear Sir:

I found a 50 cent piece in my pocket last week and went and blowed it on OLD WEST. Say, you've got a ring-tailed wampus cat there. I have read "Big Foot Wallace" and "The Haunted Corral" and remember Jo Flieger in his 101 Ranch performance. Also read in the papers in 1937 about him in Arizona and the troubles he had.

I am framing the back cover—I like it very much. The other stories looked good so I guess I wouldn't take a one dollar bill for the magazine unless I found another one first and that might be hard to do. So, I'll keep this one. Thanks very much and keep 'em coming.—James F. Ferguson, 132 Irving Street, Denver, Colorado.

Personally, Jim, I think 50c is too much for any Hosstail rag. But if you readers don't give a doublehootenanyingdurn—well, we'll work our fool heads off to keep 'er coming.—Joe.

Dear Joe:

I'm one of the worst kind of Westerners you ever hope to meet. I was born and reared out West and never thought much about it till I had to leave. I was lucky enough to have had for my pa Charley Bryan who was an old cowpoke turned miner. He used to sit by the hours and tell of life on the frontier, but I never paid it much mind.

Anyhow, after I got down here I chanced upon your TRUE WEST on the newsstand. Naturally, I bought it. After reading it through, I sent in my subscription for TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES. My collection now consists of five, which is why I'm writing.

A loud cheer for OLD WEST and I sure hope that you *will* reprint TRUE WEST, Volume 1, No. 1, for the younger ones like me who haven't given a hoot about where we were born.

You can be sure that my kids will though, 'cause in my will will be my collection of FRONTIER TIMES, TRUE WEST, and OLD WEST. And you can bet your boots that when I get back home, I'll see the West in a different light—thanks to your books.

You never know what you have, till you don't.—J. Ferree, 216 Suzanne Drive, Warner Robins, Georgia.

Dear Sir:

I have always been a subscriber or reader of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES. saving all the issues, and probably will become an OLD WEST subscriber. However, reprinting stories from early TRUE WEST would not interest me as I have them. If most of the magazine will be material not already published in TRUE WEST or FRONTIER TIMES, it should be very good.

I vote for *no* reprints of stories from early TRUE WEST. I do vote for printing complete stories of the West which are rare and out of print as you did with "Nine Years Among The Indians."

Keep TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES as they are and I'll always be a subscriber.—William C. Ogroski, Jr., Hanna Road. R. R. 1, Box 133, Manchester, Missouri.

We've heard from only a *very* few readers who have the first issues of TRUE WEST. The vote is so overwhelming that we *must* reprint them. I'll guarantee you folks that have them: We are going to add enough new material to be worth many times the price of the magazine. A rare old book that costs at least $50.00, for instance—that's 100 times more than you pay for this magazine.—Joe.

Dear Editor Wagner:

After reading "Big Winnie" in OLD WEST, I recognized this horse by his picture. He threw me high in the air in 1942. Here is my story: I left San Francisco, California, for a short rest in Reno, Nevada. While there I knew the manager of a resort near Loyalton, California, and I decided to go out there and visit him. After arriving at the resort I found no one at home. The sign said, "Gone to Loyalton, back this evening." This resort is in very high altitude and it was rather chilly standing around.

I walked out the forest road to keep warm among the high pine trees. When I came back I went over to the horse barn and corral. Three horses were in the pens and one of them was Big Winnie. He came up to me and nosed me. He was so gentle I could pet him any place and he liked it. I decided to saddle him and take a ride. I saddled him and led him out in the road. I got one foot in the stirrup and started to swing up on him. At that he started. My weight was just the right balance to throw me high in the air. My head went up over two high wires fifteen feet from the ground. I could see over them. I lit on my feet, fell over and hurt my shoulder. The big gray gave a loud snort and ran into the bushes. He would not let me catch him to lead him back to the barn.

After a while the manager came home and I told him what I had done. He was sure scared I was hurt. He said, "I must get rid of that horse before he kills someone."

That night I saw a covered wagon camped in the road to Winnemucca, Nevada, along the W.P. Railway. I struck up a conversation with the man and his young son. They said that they lived in Winnemucca and were in the Sierra Valley trading for horses. They had quite a string of horses. I told them about the gray horse. They said they were not afraid of him and would like to have him. I told my friend about them next morning. He went with me and led the big gray down there. He traded the gray for an old kicking mare and gave the man a twenty dollar bill, saying he was glad to get that horse off the place. The man put the harness on him and he worked fine in the wagon. They left for Winnemucca.

That is the last time I have heard of the big gray 'til I read this story. No doubt if some of the old cowboys in the Sierra Valley of California read the story and see the picture of Big Winnie they will know him. He must have been raised in the Valley or the surrounding hills. I have been thrown by broncs but old Winnie threw me the highest.—Thomas Moore, P. O. Box 1005, San Saba, Texas.

Dear Joe:

I saw your new magazine, OLD WEST, advertised in the latest FRONTIER TIMES. I found one on a newsstand and think you have a real good idea. It's nice to read something when you don't have to read around advertisements. I realize though that advertising helps publish a magazine.

I like the reproduction on the back cover for framing. The only thing is that once either the front or back cover of a magazine is gone it goes to pieces. Why not put a reproduction of the front cover in the magazine so it can be pulled out but not damage the rest of the magazine? It's just an idea.

You need not worry about losing on a new magazine as long as you stick to the real facts.—Dale Hartley, Kingston, Missouri.

Sure wish we could reproduce that front cover, for framing purposes, inside the magazine, Dale. The reasons are "printerish" and complicated but it would be as expensive as shooting diamonds in a sling shot!—Joe.

Dear Joe:

You said "Tell us!" so I'm telling you.

Your first issue of OLD WEST is great! It is exactly what some of us have been waiting for. Your idea of combining a *new* piece with a reprint of a valuable, out of print book is just what the doctor ordered.

That *new* one, "The Haunted Corral" by A. Kinney Griffith, was a terrific job—both the writing and the pictures. If I'm any judge (and I am), Griffith is not only a whale of a writer but a research expert far beyond the ordinary. I couldn't find a single error of fact in his historical data! This is the first time I've been able to say that about any Western Americana.

I enjoyed the book reprint of "Big Foot Wallace," too, and I know that there are many whose pocketbook will not permit them to buy the original. For them it is a real discovery!

I predict that you will find great success in your new venture. Find us another rare book and give your feature writer, Griffith, another assignment. It's a RARE WRITER who can make history so readable, dramatic and memorable. Keep up the good work.—Walter Ramsey, 1020 South Main Street, Los Angeles, California.

Dear Mr. Small:

Thanks for the very nice reading in your new book, OLD WEST. Truly a fine piece of work. After reading several features more than once, you should hike the price up so some of these so-called books would take notice.—John Ayres, Pan American World Airways, Fort Churchill, Manitoba, Canada.

Gentlemen:

I have perused the first issue of OLD WEST and, as per your request, would like to offer a few of my own personal observations and suggestions as to the concept involved and its treatment.

The old book idea is a valid one, and a good one, and I am for such a boost to the current printed distribution of western literature. I only hope you will not digress in the future to obscure or little interest books for the sake of continuing a good idea when you realize you have used up the majority of worthwhile available books. You may contend that the supply is nearly inexhaustible, but I similarly contend that the books worth reprinting because of true literary and/or historical significance are limited.

Insofar as reprinting material from early issues is concerned, I feel you are missing the mark slightly in what the collectors actually want. The next best thing to having, as an example, the first issue of TRUE WEST, is to have an exact copy. Obviously, if you simply reprint those issues, no matter how great the demand, you are going to break a price market in their value and create no small amount of enmity. Nonetheless, the people who cry for the early issues are those that not only are interested in the material content, but in a very common American intellectual trait known as collection completism. Simply put, they not only take interest in the material, but in having it on a collection basis as it appeared. Reprinting one article from issue one, another from issue four, etc., does not fulfill this need. The material may all appear over a period of time, but when are you sure you have every article that appeared in every issue of TW you lack? Which issue did it appear in? And, ultimately, where does reprinting early material become too repetitive for the followers?

I rather think the solution would be reprinting all of an issue, in its entirety. **(That's exactly what we're doing.—Ed.)** If this be done under the cover of OLD WEST, and a book added at the end, then very fine. But if the follower picks up his issue of OLD WEST, and can know that after he opens the cover he is reading the first issue of TW page by page, and the book is supplementary material, his collecting ambition has been satisfied, and the market value of the actual first issue has not been particularly damaged. If necessary, as a safeguard, the word OLD WEST REPRINT could be placed at the bottom of each page.

Assuming OLD WEST were to contain all original material, however, I would not like to see it simply follow the pattern of TW and FT. However excellent these publications have been, they are not without their share of poorer material, and I frankly do not feel the market will really support another "standardized" publication, despite the quality of TW and FT as they now stand.

An alternative idea to this might be that, besides the book, each issue of OLD WEST could specialize on a particular subject. As an example, an entire issue devoted to articles on guns of the old west, another containing articles studying all the Earps in depth. another on treasures, etc. and concerning itself with *only* that topic at hand. The book could or could not pertain provided it was kept separate, as was done with this first issue.

Finally, we should note that the 50c price tag should not be of any consequence to your followers, and you shouldn't be too worried that they would object. One hundred pages without advertising is a very expensive proposition, as you are certainly aware, and I think your followers will appreciate this fact sufficiently not to complain very loudly. —M. Ron Parker, No. 5 Elm, Kentfield, California.

Dear Joe:

I purchased OLD WEST the other day and never enjoyed a book so much. You asked for all your readers to let you know what we think of it and I, for one, think it's the GREATEST. I've been reading TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES for a good while and have always enjoyed them very much. Never thought another magazine would top them but you've really done it with OLD WEST. It's a dern good book and I sure would hate for it to be stopped. Now I'm waiting for the next issue as I've already finished reading the first. That's the only thing that's wrong with your books, they don't come out often enough. I couldn't lay OLD WEST down; it is so interesting. I've gotten a few more readers for you and they feel the same as I do about your magazines. So keep up the good work.

I just wish my granddad was able to write some stories for you. He's 100 years young and has really had some experiences. You can't imagine the joy your magazines have brought to him. That's one reason I'm writing this, to thank you for my granddad's smiling face when he hears your stories. Every time I walk into his room he asks if I've got "our" books.—Mrs. Jim Barnett, Route 1, Box 150A, Clovis, New Mexico.

Howdy!

I would like to say the first edition of OLD WEST is just what I have been hoping for. I started a little late getting TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES but I bought all the back copies you had available and a few here that I had to pay quite a bit for.

I hope you will keep on with OLD WEST just like the first edition. The story about Big Foot Wallace is great. He was a good friend and neighbor of my great-grandfather, William Armstrong, in Frio County. They were Mier prisoners together—they both drew white beans.—Edythe Rosenberry, 1841 W. French, San Antonio, Texas.

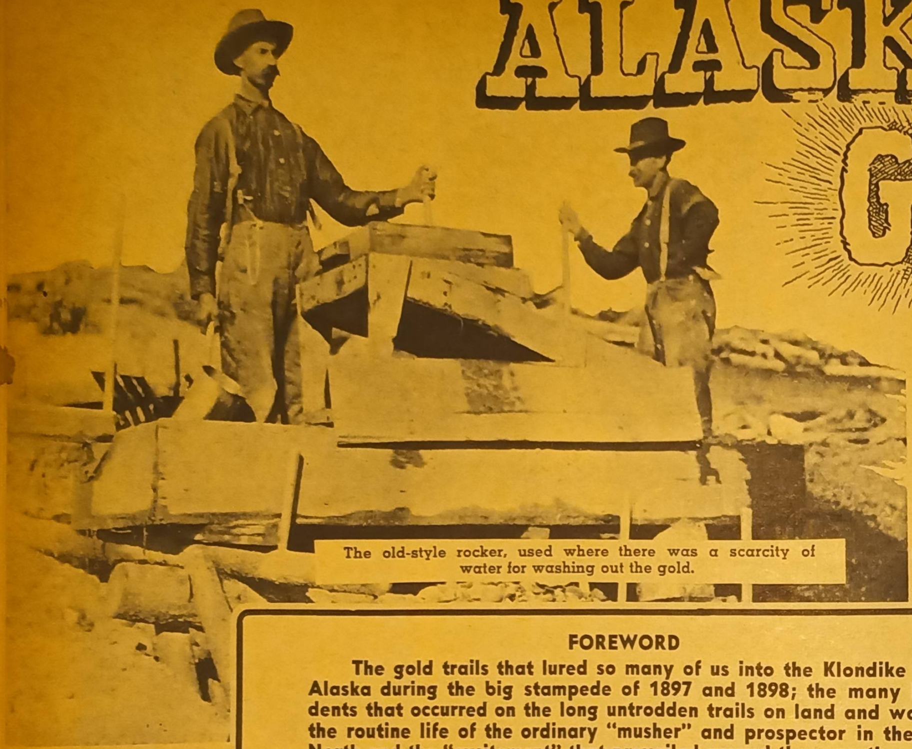
Wish we could print all your letters—but you don't know *how many* we got! S'long 'til next time.—Hosstail.

ALASKA GOLD TRAILS of 1898

BY WILLARD DOBBIN

Submitted by
MARY ANNETTE TUSSING

Photos Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard,
University of Washington Library,
and Mr. W. D. MacBride.



The old-style rocker, used where there was a scarcity of water for washing out the gold.

Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

FOREWORD

The gold trails that lured so many of us into the Klondike and Alaska during the big stampede of 1897 and 1898; the many incidents that occurred on the long untrodden trails on land and water, the routine life of the ordinary "musher" and prospector in the far North and the "excitement" that prevailed around those northern fur trading posts are described in this story, from the personal viewpoint of the writer.

—Willard J. Dobbin

WE ARE HEADED FOR THE KLONDIKE

WE WERE drifting along peacefully in the middle of the swift running Athabaska River. Our Indian pilot stood at the steering oar of our big scow earnestly watching the river ahead. Suddenly he called: "Ready, boys, berry soon plenty bad water."

Our glance ahead told us that we were at the head of a long and treacherous looking rapids, full of big rocks. The pilot told us to "pull, boys, pull!"

Racing between the boulders the size of a small house, our old scow was being tossed around like a toy balloon, while four men were pulling hard on the oars and three others were straining every muscle on the long steering oars—all eyes peering through the thick mist eagerly scanning the scene ahead in anticipation of a disastrous smash-up somewhere among the rocks.

After we had pulled through the rapids and out into calm water again, we had time to realize that it had been only a week or so since the news of the great gold discovery in the Klondike had startled the world, and that we were already on the way.

The incident thus described was one of many that took place on one of the seven large rivers which we had to navigate on our voyage into the Klondike and Alaska during the big gold stampede of 1897.

Reading the newspapers with their full page headlines of the startling news—"Rich Gold Mines Discovered in the Klondike"—put us red-blooded adventurers on our toes. And when we read the following items of shipping news, the desire to get into the stampede was upon us:

"On June 5th, 1897, the steamship *Excelsior* arrived in San Francisco laden with miners from the Klondike, who in turn, were laden with gold."

"The steamship *Portland* arrived at Seattle on July 7, 1897, with a ton and a half of gold on board. The *Portland* came from St. Michaels, Alaska, at the mouth of the Yukon River. The 68 miners on board had about a million and a quarter of dollars in gold dust, taken out of the new Klondike gold fields."

Our party being the first to organize in eastern Canada, created no little interest among the adventurous as well as the general public.

Our party consisted of seven; a newspaper reporter, a deputy auditor, two wholesale dry goods clerks and three electricians from the Royal Electric Company, all young men under the age of 27 years. The news reporter we elected as Captain, the others were nicknamed The Duke, The Magician, Sparks, Fatty, Frenchy and myself as Dob.

The average Westerner, being associated more or less with mining, and being located nearer the scene of operations, also of a more practical mind in the feasibility of the reported fabulous wealth, was in a position to take more prompt action than the average Eastern tenderfoot, who always had an unusual allowance of red tape to go through before venturing on a trip such as this one. The result was that the Western man had his outfit well along on the trail before we were started.

Reports reached eastern Canada of the terrible hardships, and in some cases the impossibility, of crossing the Chikoot and White Passes on the Skagway Trail. The enormous prices paid for having outfits packed over these trails was also in these reports. With that news, and the glowing accounts of the new trail into the Klondike by way of Edmonton and the Mackenzie River, an all water route down stream, better known as the "back-door route" into the Klondike—we chose the latter. This route impressed us favorably on account of being all Canadian.

The Hudson's Bay Company was almost exclusively in possession of this new and easy water route for eighteen hundred miles, with trading posts established all along the way.

Every business in that district was more or less interested in having the great rush of gold seekers try this new

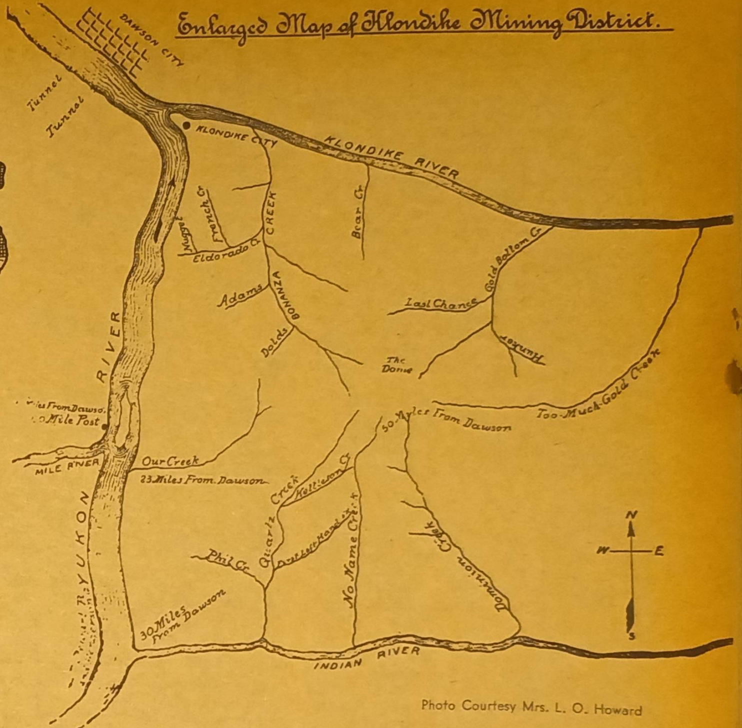


Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

Map of Klondike Mining district, showing area traveled by the author.

See Inside Back Cover for
Map of Alaska and Northwest
Canadian Frontier

A typical Klondike pioneer's cabin.

Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

Thwaites. 5404.
A Pioneer's Cabin in Alaska

route. If they didn't like it, they could return and try another, provided they lived to return and the outfitters did not have all their money.

We accepted the Edmonton route as the most feasible for that time of year. We were led to believe that it was possible, without any serious mishap, to reach the Klondike that fall before the rivers froze up.

Through the kindly offices of a Canadian Pacific Railroad official, we secured free transportation for our entire outfit, excepting fares, from Montreal to Edmonton. This outfit nearly filled half the baggage car.

When we left Montreal, August 11, 1897, we were unaccustomed to the hard pioneer life of the northern rivermen, but by persistent pounding through, succeeded in gaining that ruggedness which only hardy northern trail mushers attain.

At Winnipeg the chief official of the Hudson's Bay Company gave us letters of credit and the recommendations to be presented at the different posts down the rivers which would help us along on the voyage.

A missionary, with his flock of twenty-four little Indian children, came aboard our car just before leaving Winnipeg. They rode all day with us. They were brought down from their reservation to the city to see the sights. We all enjoyed that day's trip, watching their funny antics, and the great interest taken in everything going on around them.

Little did we think that before our voyage was ended we, too, would marvel at a city's sights as did the little Indian children on their first visit to civilization. Nor did we visualize ourselves eating and sleeping in the same tepee with their more primitive distant relatives, far down along the northern rivers.

We arrived in Calgary in the afternoon of the 15th. Here we had to change cars and take a little jerk-water railroad which then ran up to Edmonton. This train ran only every other day, up one day and down the next. Here we were compelled to wait over a day and a half. Traveling on trains with a track clear of other trains, but by no means of cattle, is a novel change from the main line. Ten hours of pull-ups, slow-ups, back-ups and pick-ups and we had covered the 180 miles to Edmonton, not counting the railroad ties unloaded en route or the cattle killed.

Edmonton, an original frontier town, end of the railroad and everything, located on the east bank of the Saskatchewan River, had a population of nearly 400. Here we found two stores, a good many saloons and Klondike information bureaus aplenty.

This town was nine miles beyond the extreme edge of civilization and 100 miles lay between it and the river landing, where we were to take a boat to continue our journey.

Here our troubles began. We purchased a great quantity of coarser grub, such as flour, rolled oats, corn meal, rice, coffee, tea, etc., and by the way, we also laid in quite a stock of trading tea and tobacco to swap with the Indians for services needed and fresh meat.

Through the earnest persuasion and advice of some self-appointed advisers who owned a bunch of bronchos, we were nearly persuaded to abandon our water route and take the overland trail with pack trains, crossing the Rocky Mountain Range at the head of the Peace River and through to the head of the Stickenne River country.

Other parties, following us, took the advice of those pack horse owners and went off up into that country, only to perish. The horses and some of the men died from starvation and scurvy. The poor fellows who lived to return found their way down to the mouth of the Stickenne River on the Pacific coast 22 months afterwards, reduced to walking skeletons. They never reached within 1,000 miles of the Klondike. About the only thing that prevented us from taking the overland trail was the fact that some of our boys could not manage a horse without a pair of oars or a rudder, and fortunate it was for us that they could not.

TENDERFEET GET TASTE OF MUSHING

WITH AN eye to business, and having very little competition, the trading companies advanced their prices twenty to fifty per cent. The teamsters didn't overlook this opportunity either and charged us as much as they thought we would stand for.

A year's outfit for seven men, including a twenty-two foot canoe, is no small jag and we had three wagon loads, as much as would stick on. It cost us ten dollars a day per team for three teams and we had to drive one of them ourselves. That price did not include our passage so we had to walk.

Two or three parties were arriving on every train and everything was selling at sight. It was certainly a harvest for those who had goods to sell.

A party called the "Duluth Boys" arrived there the day after we did and through extra strides got their outfit together and away on the morning of the third day.

There was a very eccentric old man in one of the parties who somewhat resembled the original Rip Van Winkle on account of a very luxuriant growth of whiskers and who was popularly nicknamed "Snow Shoes." I mention this as Mr. Snow Shoes will show up again later in this story.

Our party not being complete without a mascot, we added a common yellow dog which we named Klondike.

After much preparation and many arguments we finally got away at nine o'clock in the evening of the fourth day.

Right off the bat we tenderfoots had to mush those 100 miles. It is customary, where several men are to make a start for any great distance, to hike off a few miles the first day, thereby accustoming themselves gradually to the conditions, also to be together for an early start the next morning.

We walked nine miles that first night. And may I be permitted not to mention the state of our feet after that nine-mile night march, to stay nothing of the stones and ruts we ran into? We were advised to wear moccasins on account of our long walk, and the country into which we were going was exclusively a moccasin country.

We pitched camp—that is, unhitched the horses, ate a cold lunch and "turned in" out in the open. Our sleeping bags came into play and they were good things. If we got tired of lying on one stone we could turn over onto another without losing the covers, and if the horses got to herding too close to us we could rise and shout at them in our sleep without having to go to bed again.

At 5:30 in the morning some unkind person yelled, "Wolves!" We all got up, but those sleeping bags were not adapted for a hasty exit. The teamsters, accustomed to that life, gave us many valuable pointers on camp cooking and how to make a "shake down" at night.

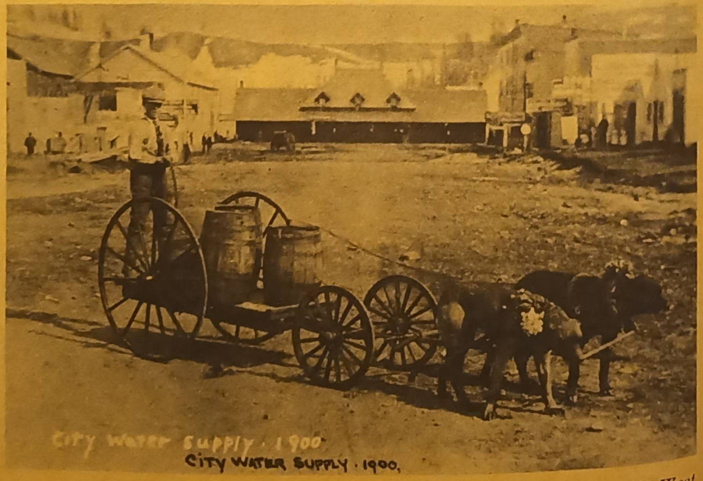
Having to ride astride an upturned canoe on top of a load over a rough road and with blistered feet was a thing to be remembered for many a day. We trudged along for three days through a wild and unbroken country, with here and there a patch of small spruce or scrub oak, until we reached the foothills of the summit, called the "hogsback," which divided the waters of the Hudson and the Arctic Ocean.

These hills were all sand where the trail wound its way around through the burnt stumps and "dead falls," uphill and down, and was a subject for sorry thoughts for the teamsters and more so for the poor horses.

Along those hills we saw our first game, a bear. Fortunately he was fully a half mile away on a bare hillside. Our guns were all strapped in the middle of the loads. Had he headed our way, though, there would have been seven men up astride that canoe.

Dog-drawn water supply wagon. Water, for many years, was sold at from 5c to 7c a bucket.

Photo Courtesy W. D. MacBride



After traveling about 18 miles on the hogsback, the trail suddenly dipped down to the landing on Athabaska River, the point from which our water route began.

Athabaska Landing has a vast expanse of uninhabited country tributary to it and is situated on a low plateau convenient for floating driftwood home during high water. The nearest settlement was Edmonton, about 100 miles away. It was from this point that Father Pierre DeSmet, a Belgian missionary, nearly 180 years ago, journeyed over the Athabaska Pass to preach the gospel to the Indians of the great Oregon territory. He had to make the arduous journey up river by canoe and on foot across the summit of the Rocky Mountains, the same pass that the Canadian National Railway now uses on its way across the divide. Little did Father DeSmet think then that in less than 150 years one could traverse his trail through the pass riding comfortably in a Pullman car with all the comforts of home.

Athabaska Pass was one of the first trans-continental gateways of North America, the first through which came any large number of white people. Through it passed pioneers, to whom, in large measure, we owe the foundation of civilization on the North American Continent.

This post was the outlet for the great fur bearing northern country extending to the most northerly points of this continent. The annual delivery of furs through this station of the Hudson's Bay Company up to about 1899, we were told, averaged one and a half million dollars. In all those years the Hudson's Bay Company had a complete monopoly of the fur trade in that country. But during the 10 or 15 years succeeding that period, the "free traders" invaded the fur trails and cut into the big company's fur business quite extensively.

These independent traders established themselves at nearly all of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading posts and increased the trading value of fur so much that they got a good share of the furs. Previous to the coming of the free traders, the values paid to the natives for furs were remarkably low and the furs abundant.

The Hudson's Bay Company owned and operated a line of stern wheel steamers, or river boats. There were three of them and each had its own section of the river, on account of unnavigable rapids, where boats, even small boats, could not pass. The upper division took in the upper Athabaska, the second had the Slave River and Athabaska Lake, and the lower had the Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River.

Our first move here was to have a scow built. We engaged a half-breed boat builder to build a 38-foot scow, which cost us $65. To hurry things along we were to help—for every day there meant a day behind on our long trip. We first had to go out and cut down the timber and build up a scaffold to put the logs on. Then we sawed out boards from the logs, one man above and the other below, dragging that heavy whip-saw up and down, clear through the full length of the log. The boards were cut one and a half inches thick. That job surely gave us a real test of what was required of men who go up into that country and have to depend entirely upon their own efforts for existence.

While this boat business was going on there must be something made ready to eat for the hungry boat builders. It was agreed that each man in turn should stay in camp and do the cooking for a period of one week, until the cook's job went around the circle of seven men. We drew straws for our positions in the circle and I got No. 1 straw, which gave me the cook's job during the heavy boat building period, so I got out of it pretty easy right on the start. It was also agreed that the first man to complain about the grub or the cooking had to take the job and finish out the cook's week besides his own turn at it. Under that penalty the cook could get away with most any kind of cooking. And yet we all survived.

Our letters from the Hudson's Bay chief at Winnipeg were presented to the agent of the Company at the landing with a view of securing one of their Indian pilots to escort us down through the 90-mile stretch of a very dangerous succession of rapids in the river between this point and the next post below, which was Fort McMurray.

We engaged one who had acted as pilot for the Company's small boats through the rapids for years and who said he knew every stone in the river, having come into personal contact with them all. But I think he overlooked a stone or two, as we made a couple of discoveries which he did not know of.

In order to engage him we had to pay him in advance, or rather make a deposit of $75 with the agent so that "John" could receive goods in payment on his return from down river. Being fully occupied with building the boat and the animated interest taken in fighting mosquitoes, the time arrived for the launching of our vessel. A bottle was broken over her bow with considerable pomp and ceremony and she was named the "Big 7." The name of the bottle must have been a hoo-doo to that boat from that time on, as she leaked from the first time she struck water until she went to pieces on a rock ten months afterwards.

At 12:00 o'clock on the 26th day of August we were ready to hoist anchor, the scow full of grub, clothing, accoutrements and dog, when a terrific rain and hailstorm burst upon us without any apparent signs of approach, soaking everything before we had time to get tarpaulins over our cargo. That necessitated unloading to get the water out and rearrange the cargo. I have often since thought that storm was a forewarning by the powers that be to abandon our trip.

The Duluth boys, being more mechanical than we, got their boat finished and were off a day ahead of us. We finally got away at 3 p.m. with the sun bright and warm.

The Big 7 was propelled by two oars twelve feet long on each side, and an 18-foot steering oar. We pulled into midstream and let her drift with the silent but swift current. After rounding a bend we lost all traces of civilization.

PILOT JOHN GIVES US INSTRUCTIONS

AS WE were quietly drifting along, the pilot John undertook to instruct us, mostly by grunts and gestures, just what to do and how, when he gave the command. It was strictly necessary to know how to manage a boat through the rapids successfully when our lives were dependent on our own movements.

The cook stove, a sheet iron affair, was set up on the front deck and wood was loaded on, so we didn't have anything to stop for. During the first night and until we got to the rapids, a lookout was detailed on a two-hour watch while the rest peacefully slept. Our time was too valuable for us to tie up overnight when there were no rapids near. But the current was swift and should the boat get near a bank somewhere, there was danger of a sweeper (a tree hanging out over the water) scraping a few things overboard or breaking something. Everybody made his own shakedown as best he could so as to be able to respond promptly to the alarm of rocks ahead.

The pilot had four expressions, each one explaining in itself the nature of a certain stretch of water—"Fine riber, little fine riber, bod riber, and bod bod riber," which meant "without any danger, little dangerous, very dangerous and impassable."

The first night we drifted about 50 miles without touching an oar or having any incident worthy of note. In the evening of the second day John ordered us to make fast on shore until morning. The precaution was so that we would have daylight to run the Pelican Rapids, which were in John's words "little fine riber." John, being acquainted with all these rapids, gave us no opportunity to pull ashore to walk down and give them the once over before attempting to run them, but would pull right for the head and yell at us to "pool boys, pool boys." If the difference between John's little fine riber and his bod riber was as great as that between his fine riber and little fine riber, we all concluded that we would never live to see a second one.

No sooner had we pulled into the rapids than we were off down in among the rocks, dashing past big boulders at breakneck speed, into dip holes here, on top of swells there, getting soaked to the skin from water hitting the rocks. All this time John kept yelling at the top of his voice, "Pool, boys, pool!" This continued for a half mile or more. When we finally completed this nerve-wracking ride and had a chance to collect our senses and to ask John if we had struck any rocks, we took a unanimous vote agreeing to shoot anyone who advocated this route as a practicable one into the Klondike.

When we were again in the calm water and drifting peacefully, we could hardly realize that only ten minutes had passed since we had been in the middle of that boiling sea and dodging wicked rocks. We took an inventory of all hands and the dog. We had just recovered from discussing the fact that there were nine more dangerous rapids to go through when our pilot announced the near approach of the Grand Rapids, a bod, bod riber.

We arrived at the landing on the shore and tied up. Here we took a general survey. We decided to pack everything over portage.

The river took a big drop at this point, not in the form of a falls but a long chute over a very rocky apron, where even a log would come to grief. At the foot of this apron were boulders, dozens of them, as large as houses, where the water dashed, making a terrific roar.

Opposite this was an island which divided the river and during high water would cause an equal flow down each channel. But at low water stage, as was the case then, a small portion of the water flowed through this dry channel, so small a stream that an empty boat could not be taken through without hard as well as arduous work. The low water also prevented us from landing at the usual landing place on the head of the island, thereby making double the work of getting our goods onto the island. I don't know how much our outfit weighed but we had 2,100 pounds of flour, about 850 pounds of bacon and everything else in proportion. Every pound of this outfit had to be portaged for nearly a mile.

Owing to the many big rocks on one side and the apron (or death-trap) on the other, we were obliged to make a landing nearly a quarter of a mile above the island on the dry channel side. With the shallow water and rocky bottom we had to make a great many trips to the island and back with that big scow. We could take only two or three hundred pounds to the load. We were constantly running upon the rocks, piling out to lift the scow off, perhaps to go only a few feet and then repeat the operation. Our canoe, being of the Peterboro make, would not stand the pressure in this instance where, with a load in it the big rocks figured so extensively, so for that reason we did not use it here.

We eventually got our outfit to the head of the island and on investigation found that we could use an old tramway belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. By patching up an old push car which was minus many parts, and by replacing here and there a wooden rail for the track, we were now ready to transport our outfit to the lower end of the island if all went well.

We met two old trappers that evening, who were on their way to Edmonton from the lower rivers with a small boat load of furs. They camped with us that night and around our big log fire, told us stirring yarns of adventure. Knowing that we were greenhorns, they gave us much valuable information.

Just having "lined" their boat up through these rapids, wading waist deep at times, as their wet clothes would indicate, for a distance of 70 miles, they could speak as white man to white man, and gave us a complete description of the nature of the river we had yet to pass over, or hoped to.

One pointer they gave us I remember, proved its worth afterward as a safeguard against rheumatism. "Never exchange wet clothing for dry. Always manage to dry your clothes on your body by standing near a rousing log fire."

They were men of experience, hardy and rough cast, adapting themselves to the conditions of the country. The next night we had ample opportunity to try this drying clothes on our backs and nearly every night after that for weeks.

A generous thought prompted one of the members of our party before leaving Montreal, to add to our outfit a couple of two-gallon cans of rum for "medicinal purposes." On this occasion, to show our appreciation of their good advice and also to introduce their taste again to the real stuff, we brought out the can and, of course, we could not let them drink alone.

Before letting the strangers go on the next morning we each wrote a letter home for them to take out and mail. For it would be several weeks before our pilot John would return from Fort McMurray, and then he would have to walk the entire 180 miles back.

We proceeded to repair the tram car and track, but miscalculated somewhat. The car, with only a half load on it, pulled fully four horse-power strong, to say nothing of the many times it ran off the track. I think we took only one half-load of goods over on that car besides loading the scow onto it for the last trip down, and a down trip it was. The boat projected over the edges of the car so that we couldn't reach under to place the wheels on the track when they ran off. We left the car at the bottom of the island and packed everything else over after that. A good half day we lost monkeying with that car while the Duluth boys gained a half day on us.

It would be well to state here that in those rapids the following spring, when the great 1898 rush of about 3,000 miners for the Klondike over this "back door" route took place, a party of five men misunderstood the instructions given them concerning this dangerous piece of water, and through carelessness were taken down over the rapids. One man was drowned, the others barely escaped with their lives. Their boat was smashed to bits and they lost their entire outfit.

The body of the drowned man was not recovered until the following spring some 80 or 90 miles below. It had drifted up on shore and was somewhat mutilated by Indian dogs.

WE SHOOT A STRETCH OF BAD RIVER

WE LAUNCHED the scow and loaded up again. We had a small channel to cross and round a point where there was another stretch of "bod riber." Our visitors the night before had told us they had met two prospectors just below us who said they were waiting for us to come along and help them out. The Duluth boys had told them of our coming. They had a boat too large for two men to handle through the rapids. With their light load they could lighten our boat and we could lend them an extra man.

When we rounded the point we saw two men in a boat, stuck fast between two rocks nearly out in the middle of a dangerous piece of water. They had attempted to run those rapids without any other aid.

A boat, other than a canoe, required not less than three men to take it safely through this series of rapids. We proceeded to try and get help to them. From our point of view it meant a smash-up and a probable drowning if they got off without an extra man in their boat to help pull through the treacherous piece of water just below, which they could not avoid.

After numerous attempts had been made to float a long line on a block of wood to them from a point above, our pilot suggested that we tow our scow back up stream a little above them, then pull down straight for their boat while we passed down into the rapids below. Such things had been done by the Hudson's Bay men as a last resort. But on a vote of the party the suggestion was over-ruled, as all we possessed was in our scow.

After the prospectors had lifted and pried from one side and another they succeeded in getting her loose. Away they went, each man jumping for his oar, down through rocks and foam, their little boat being tossed from side to side, one end up then the other, until she rode out clear of the last breaker when we saw the two men waving their hats at us.

And then came our turn. We were getting hardened to it by this time. If the pilot thought it was all right it was okay with us as he knew the river. While going down these rapids we slightly grazed a couple of rocks, doing no damage to the boat but giving us a pretty bad scare.

We pulled up alongside the two men who were tied up to shore and had a general hand-shaking confab. They agreed to take some of our load and one man, making it better for both parties; they would also try to follow our pilot down through the rest of the rapids.

Reports reached us two years later that a number of scows, with their quota of men, were wrecked on the rocks while going through these 90 miles of rapids in the following spring of '98. Many of the parties lost all their outfits and had to walk back up the river and out to Edmonton.

There were so many parties, all anxious to go down just as soon as possible, that there weren't enough pilots to take them all through. They may have been experienced rivermen, but without knowing the location of the many death-traps in those rapids they were pretty sure to end in disaster before reaching Fort McMurray.

The country was very rough, looked rather like a spur off the main Rockies, and was heavily timbered with spruce, balsam, hemlock, fir and birch.

The stains on the cut walls of the river through this section indicated the presence of minerals. We passed one place in that locality known as the "gas camp," where a flow of natural illuminating gas came out of crevices in the rocky shore. Trading companies' crews coming up river always stopped there for their noonday lunch or night camp, where they could cook their meals on a real gas flame. They had plugged up the cracks with mud, leaving only a small hole here and there to be used by all as a gas range with an inexhaustible supply of fuel.

Owing to the extremely unnavigable river and the exclusive rights or territorial monopoly of the trading companies, a poor man could not get the proper appliances into the country to drill for oil. The chief aim and object of the trading companies had been to keep white settlers out of the country, as they hampered the fur trade and put extravagant notions into the heads of the Indians. Thus it was that up to within a few years of the gold rush scarcely any white men outside the employ of the fur companies had gone down more than a few hundred miles into that country.

During the day that we met and took into our party the two men, we ran about 60 miles of nearly continuous rapids with hardly a mile stretch of quiet water at a time, going at an extremely rapid pace, hardly having time to pull ashore before we were at the head of another rapids.

All of the more important rapids were named after some particular accident or incident that took place, such as Dead Man's Rapids, Pelican Rapids, Sturgeon Rapids, Boiler Rapids and so on. Boiler Rapids was named from an accident to a Hudson's Bay Company boat containing a small boiler for one of their steamers on the lower river, which struck a rock, went to pieces, and sank.

About this time we put in a very trying day, trying especially on our nerves—and anyone subject to nervousness should never take this route.

After running the Boiler—a very dangerous as well as exciting rapids about three miles long—we came to the Cascades, three in number, where the water takes a sudden drop like ordinary falls. The first one was a drop of three feet, the second one five feet and the third a ten foot drop straight down. The first one was easy, the second not so easy for we dipped in two barrels of water while going down over it. The bow plowed down into the water, knocking our stove down and sweeping everything off the front deck. But when we came to the third drop—it was there that we almost met our Waterloo.

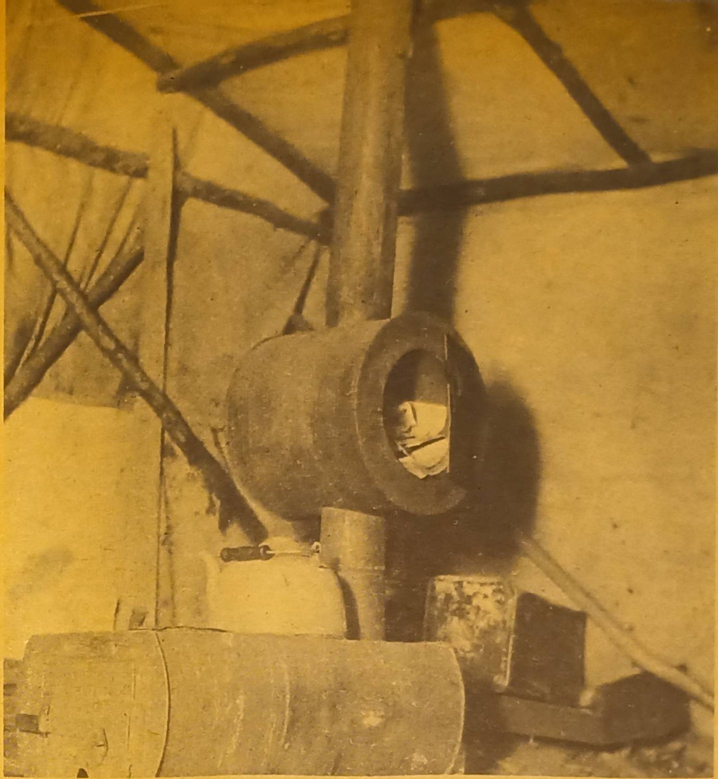


Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

Heating and cooking stove used by Klondike miners in their tent homes during the Gold Rush days.

This last drop was just around and below a sharp bend where the current was very swift. In order to make a sure landing and take no chances, we pulled ashore just above the bend, intending to line our boats down around to the head of the cascade. We got the stern lines rigged and two men in the boat, the rest of the boys on lines on shore.

The bank along this point was very steep and here and there the springs out of the side hills had kept the ground wet. As soon as we struck the wet dirt on a hillside with the boat and a heavy downhill pull on us, we might as well have tried to stop a steam engine. Away she went, dragging us through the slippery clay, over stones and brush, expecting each moment to be dragged into the river. The stern line, after slipping through everybody's hands and blistering them, swung loose and let the boat swing around broadside with the current. Two men were still clinging onto the bow line, hanging on for dear life, when her bow struck a boulder.

PILOT JOHN GETS LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

OUR LONG heavy steering car fell into the current, broke, and went overboard. It scraped off a lot of our goods that were piled too high on the back of the boat.

About 25 feet above the falls the bow line boys succeeded in getting her ashore. The rest were behind scrambling through the brush, endeavoring to get down to save some of the goods that were drifting on down the river after having gone over the falls.

The canoe came into good play again and was quickly transported to the water below. After picking up everything that floated, with the exception of a sleeping bag that was floating like a cork just below the falls in an eddy where it could not be reached by boat, pole or anything else, we rigged up a troll hook with a stone to it and after numerous attempts to throw it over the bag, succeeded in hooking it in to shore. One end of the bag had filled with air which kept it afloat.

We went back and sized up our outfit to see what was gone. A coonskin coat, a sack of clothes with a purse in it containing about $100 cash, and a number of other smaller articles were missing.

We nearly had a drowning case added to our catastrophe. During the highest point of the excitement, when the boat struck the rock and broke the sweep, one of the boys in the boat, never looking back to see what broke, jumped overboard into the swift current and started for shore. Ten seconds more and he would have gone over the falls.

We packed all our stuff to a point just below the falls, where it could be loaded up conveniently the next day. When we had satisfied the demands of our stomachs with a big supper and had a general "confab" on the "ifs and ands" we turned in.

It was a bad night. Our hands were raw from handling the rope and our bones sore from sleeping on a solid rock bed. That, added to the loss we mourned, was sufficient cause for all hands to be crabby with one another that morning.

Our first move after breakfast was to get our boat over the falls. It had to be run over, too, there being no room at the side to portage it. With long rope lines on her and two men in her stern, she dropped over the ten-foot falls, taking in hardly any water.

Loading again, we got on our way. But our troubles for that day did not end there. In trying to run the Mountain Rapids we ran slip-bang onto a big flat rock and stuck there for about six hours. The water was about four and a half feet deep here, just about up to the armpits and running quite swift. The rock was about six feet square with a flat top and about one foot under the surface. The old scow slid up onto it and there we stuck.

Our load was too heavy to try and teeter it off and there were no poles to be had. But after many attempts at different schemes to get loose we finally were shoved off the rock by our water nymph, the Duke, who came near being left on the rock by doing so.

One of our new men, whom we named the Poet, ably describes our last two days' doings in a few verses composed for the occasion:

The glorious coonskin now is gone,
My cherished hopes have fled,
It sank beneath that whirlpool
Beyond the big Cascade.
"Reflect, my friend," the Captain
cried,
"The tragic scene is o'er;
Thank God it is not left behind,
But just has gone before.
Compare your troubles with mine own
And less will grow your ills.
Your bloomin' coon has made a chum
With my one hundred bills."

At last the excitement settled down,
And then the Duke he knew
The Captain's ills were dollar bills,
And with the tide they flew.
The next surprise that met our eyes
Was just below the bend,
When with a shock we struck a rock,
We reckoned this our end.

We looked ahead, for every heart
Was struck with sudden fear,
When lo our gallant Duke proclaimed,
"Fear not, for I am here."
Clothed in his shirt and nothing more,
He struck in four feet deep,
To push a three-ton scow adrift;
Such courage can't be beat.
Thru the guidance of our pilot,
And lessons taught before,
Our troubles were soon ended
When we safely reached the shore.

These were the last rapids that we had to run on this division. Maybe we didn't have cause to be elated over the fact! We pulled into Fort McMurray at six p.m., the first sign of habitation thus far on the river.

Fort McMurray consisted of one good-sized log trading post and half a dozen old shacks made of logs and mud, a dozen fish racks and meat caches, built up on poles high enough off the ground to be out of reach of dogs, a few old broken sleds, birch bark canoes in all stages of imperfection, chip piles, Indian children and dogs, half starved animals that required us to keep constant watch over our boat while tied up to shore. I often saw them swim out around the boat endeavoring to get into it from behind.

We camped there overnight in order to get ourselves together after the last few days of high life. This was as far as we needed a pilot. Now that John had managed to get us through without serious calamity, we celebrated the event on his behalf as he was to hit the trail back up river 180 miles the next morning to try and reach home in time to pilot another party over the same course before it froze up.

It was suggested that John get a letter of reference as to his efficiency as a pilot, which might be of help to him. The Duke was detailed to write the letter. A few verses by our Poet will suffice as a note of explanation.

The next adventure on the road
Was down at Fort McMurray.
'Twas getting late. The pilot said
He'd go back in a hurry.
The Duke suggested they should drink
Toasts to his long success.
A bottle each they drank with ease,
And neither more or less.
"You are the finest pilot, John,
That ever steered a scow.
I'll recommend you through the press
And give you a letter now."
The Duke wrote on and on until
His notes would fill a book.
His terms got mixed and John became
"The very finest cook."

DOWN RIVER TO ATHABASKA LAKE

NEXT MORNING we each wrote a hurried letter to the home folks for John to take out and mail. Expecting the dogs around there to bother us, we tied the boat out in the stream a few feet and some of the boys slept on board. During the night there were several disturbances in that boat and some quick moves on the part of the dogs. The dogs would go back on the beach, take a run and leap right into the boat. It didn't matter what they lit on just so they got away with a slab of bacon or some other food.

The cook had started a big batch of bread dough the night before and had set it beside the log fire to rise over night. After covering the pan securely with logs and rocks to make it dog-proof, picture our surprise in the morning to behold only traces of the dough here and there, with the pan licked slick and clean. We were sorry we hadn't time to wait and see what effect that rising dough had on the miserable dogs that got away with it.

Our party left Fort McMurray with the positive assurance that the river from there to Lake Athabaska was perfectly at ease even though we had no one with us who knew the river. In the daytime, we could see the drift of the current. With an occasional pull at the oars to keep off the sand bars, it was as good as a summer picnic. We could lounge around, letting the boat drift on and on, now and then disturbing a flock of ducks or hearing the ka-plunk of dining muskrat.

When we caught a fair wind all sail was hoisted that the old hulk would stand. A head wind would drive us to shore to tie up. It took us seven days to go 180 miles. The river here on approaching the lake was very slow and sluggish. This caused many sandbars to be formed and so made our traveling very slow.

Our daily program was to pull off our clothes, pile out of the boat and shove her off a bar. I will refer to my diary to show how many sandbars there are in a large river.

Sept. 2, 1897. Left Ft. McMurray early; rained part of day; drifted until 11 a.m.; head wind; tied up. Off at 6 p.m.; drifting. Stuck on bar; stripped to shove off.

Sept. 3. Fair winds. Indian camp at 3 p.m. Traded for fish, also deerskin; struck three sand bars; stripped each time to shove off; stuck on three sand bars during night.

Sept. 4. Dog got lost; struck bad sand bar; stripped to shove off; got dog again. Slow current; drifted all night and struck four bars; rain in p.m. Traded with Indians for bearskin.

Sept. 5. Drifted part of night. Stuck on sand bar from 1 until 6 a.m. Boat cover leaked; rained all night; everybody wet and cold; stuck on bar in p.m. for two hours.

Sept. 6. Wet cold morning; head wind; got stuck on two bars during night. Shot some geese in p.m. Tied up at 7:30 p.m. for the night.

Sept. 7. Off early; raining and a cold headwind which made hard pulling all p.m. Got onto the sand bar.

Sept. 8. Drifted around and around in an eddy all night. Struck lake in evening after a fair day's travel; were blown up on a windy shore at night.

When night came on the wind would usually let up. There being no practical danger, other than sand bars and sweepers, we would always turn the old ship loose, make up our beds and roll in. After a few hours of snoring and rolling over, all hands would wake up with a start as the boat would grate along on sand and gravel and then come to a full stop.

A general alarm would be given for all hands to "roll out for sand bar."

We would get up from our warm beds, feel our way cautiously over to the edge of the boat so as not to drop into a hole. This was no joke on a dark cold night.

The two boats were tied side by side while drifting. Sometimes running in too near a bank one corner would strike a trailer, a tree that has fallen into the river and lies on the bottom with the trunk pointing down stream. Sometimes stubs of branches sticking up would catch between the two boats and interrupt our progress.

It was customary for anyone who woke up at night to take a peep out and see if we were moving by noticing the trees as we passed. One night we thought it strange that we had not once struck on a sand bar. From midnight until morning everyone that took a peep out to see if we were moving would roll up in his bed again, happy with the thought that we were traveling along fine. This smooth sailing lasted until daylight. Here we discovered that the boat had sheered into an eddy near a point and had been going around and around in a little whirlpool not more than 50 feet wide. Next morning all hands recognized the landscape as that of their sleepy visions during the night.

About 70 miles north of Fort McMurray we passed a natural tar spring where there was a constant flow of the real old black tar. For a mile or more that shore of the river had a hard coating formed on the bottom and along the bank resembling asphalt pavement dotted here and there with stones.

A small river emptying into ours some five miles above Fort McMurray was the original trail of the Hudson's Bay Company before the Pacific railroads were built. The provisions for the men at the post, consisting of 100 pounds each of flour, sugar, dried fruit and rice per year; and tea, calico and tobacco for the Indians—all these goods went in by this way. All the furs of this vast north country were shipped out by the same route on the return of the voyagers. Everything was shipped from England then, coming up the Mississippi River to St. Paul by steamboat.

At St. Paul everything was loaded into small boats and lined up the Mississippi to its head, packed over a divide into a tributary to the Red River, down that river into and across Lake Winnipeg, then up to the head of the north branch of the Saskatchewan River, then across another divide and down into this small stream which empties into the Athabaska River, down that and the Mackenzie to the Arctic Ocean and up the Peel River to Fort McPherson.

R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R
MINER

This trip would take all of one summer. Then during the winter they would portage their stuff by dog sleds across the Rocky Mountains, a distance of 80 miles, and on to the La Paire House, where the boat was used again the following spring. Then they descended 100 miles on the Bell River to the Porcupine River, down 450 miles on this river to the Yukon, up the Yukon River to old Fort Cuddahy—which is 14 miles below Dawson and Fort Selkirk, 600 miles up the Yukon above the Porcupine.

In those days the Hudson's Bay Company had trading posts all along this route. Fort Yukon and Rampart House, now in American territory, were abandoned at the time the United States bought Alaska from Russia. Up to that time all furs had to be taken out over this trail to the market in London, England. It took two years to make a trip out over this route with furs, each post adding to the load.

On September 8 we got down to Lake Athabaska. Through being misinformed as to the right channel, we took the wrong turn on entering the lake. After venturing out as far as we dared among the low sand bars left by the spring floods, we tied up to an old roof float for the night, intending to make a spurt of ten miles across the lake next morning before the wind rose.

Shortly after dark the wind picked up suddenly blowing straight in from the sea. In less than half an hour breakers were pounding over the sand bars and all over us too. Soon we were thoroughly soaked, bag and baggage. The water kept driving the old scow farther and farther back onto the bar. This bar would be entirely out of the water in calm weather. But the wind was driving the water our way. Even if it were possible to get out of our present predicament we took a chance of getting into a worse one as the night was black. Between bailing water, shivering and an occasional jolt from the "courage can," we put in a very busy night.

When morning came we could see to better our condition a little, which we promptly did: but the wind never ceased all that day. The boys were partly thankful for that after we had become as wet as was possible. We had now readjusted matters; harm had done as much for us already as it could; we all tried to make the best of things. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good.

Around the south side of this lake for miles back there stretched goose grass ground. This was the home of millions of geese that flock to the wheat fields of civilization in the fall and spring. This is one of their main hatching grounds. We picked out some dry spots on these sand bars, got behind old roots that spring floods had left on the flats. and waited. It is almost impossible for a goose to fly high during a stiff wind. They came over us, flying close to the ground. Green hunters we were, but we had goose for dinner, supper and breakfast for a month.

BAD WATER ON THE MACKENZIE

THE ELEMENTS favored us next morning; we had a fair wind and made the ten miles across Lake Athabaska and right into Fort Saskatchewan. This fort was a great improvement over Fort McMurray. It consisted of three or four quite large buildings built of whipsawed lumber and painted white. They belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company. There were also a number of well built cabins. The usual number of Siwash kids and dogs came down to see us land, wondering who we were and what, as ours was the advance party. The Duluth boys had not shown up as yet, nor had we seen them, so the men at the fort thought they had taken the wrong channel and had been blown away down the lake, as had been the experience with their own men when a wind came up suddenly out on the lake.

The post men received us well. After delivering their mail (before leaving Edmonton we were authorized to carry any mail down into the north country) and buying a few knickknacks, we proceeded on our way. The post trader gave us many instructions before leaving, as to how to get through Smith Rapids, also some small rapids not far away from the post.

A few miles from the post we entered the channel of a river flowing out of the lake. A fair wind sent us along a-humming. Two fat geese were cooking in the stove on the front deck. The nine of us (now our two boats were lashed together under one sail) were swapping yarns about shooting geese and such.

Suddenly all hands were aware that we were at the head of a nasty jump-off of about eight feet. There were only two places to pass over with any degree of safety. Each opening would admit only one boat at a time.

No one ever saw such quick moves in that party before. The boats were quickly separated, sail hauled down, every man jumped for an oar, each boat taking a different channel. We pulled for our very lives. We were too far to one side; to miss the right spots would surely mean destruction. A mishap here would be bottom side up.

The big boat cleared the rock by a hair's breadth and went over the falls partly sideways, got into an eddy just below the drop and hung there for an hour or more, going around in a small circle.

While we were thus engaged, the small boat came through the other gap. In going down it slightly glazed a large rock, enough to suddenly jerk the steering oar out of the pilot's hands. This threw him overboard and at the same time shoved the boat onto a smaller rock, which punched a large hole in the bottom. When the other boys got this boat to shore it was half full of water and everything was floating. Jay, the pilot, being a good swimmer, got safely to shore and all three proceeded to lug their water-soaked merchandise out onto land as fast as possible. We were only a short distance away from them but could give them no aid as our outfit was in need of help at this time to get our own boat out of the eddy.

The current was so swift that when we circled around toward the eddy the bow of the boat would strike into it and we would be completely turned around and started back for another round, and so on. Not until we learned the tricks of the current did we manage to get out of there. Our scow landed about a mile below the other boys; we had to scramble back up through the brush to help patch up their wreck.

When our low scow took the sudden drop over the rim of the falls, her nose pitched down into the water below and swept everything clean from the front deck. Away went our two fat roasted geese with gravy and all, mixed up with the water and cargo in the bottom of the boat. However, they were salvaged much later on after we got out of the whirlpool.

This was a kind of a loop-the-loop river and not the Slave River proper as we supposed. There were two channels leading down out of that lake which joined each other about 40 miles below. One of them is the Slave and has the Peace River emptying into it some 12 miles above the junction of this other channel. The peculiarity of this loop-the-loop river is that when the Peace is running high from the upper country rains, its waters can't get an outlet fast enough to flow down the Slave, so it runs back up this other channel into the lake. If it is flooded high it forms a fall in the opposite direction over this reef of rocks on which our small boat was broken.

We reached Fort Smith Landing on the 12th of September, and learned much about what lay before us, as this was the landing preparatory to 16 miles of the worst stretch of water in America. We had been instructed about the nature of these rapids, and were cautioned not to run by this landing without securing Indians as pilots to help us.

We engaged eight Indian men to take charge of the boats, as they would not trust to our ability as experienced oarsmen in rapids, especially in these as it required skilled rivermen, as well as pilots to handle a boat.

The Hudson's Bay Company had one ox and cart that were used on this long portage, so we engaged it to take over a full load of stuff by land and trusted the rest to the boat route.

When our fleet left the landing the next morning with five Indians in the big boat and three in the other, we were fully prepared to meet the worst. These rapids were not in the shape of those we passed up the river, but were divided up into small channels by islands, and these channels, sometimes very narrow with sharp turns, were full of straight drops of 5 to 20 feet onto rocks below. It took us 5 days to go these 16 miles, and we had to make 4 portages. The first one was a half-mile, the next three-quarters of a mile, the last two a quarter of a mile each. Every last pound of goods had to be packed over. The boats were put on skids and rolled over up hill and down.

The Indians taught us a thing or two about packing, but not until we had gone through a sore experience. I do not think there is a more tiring and headsore pack harness in the whole country than the one those Indians used. It is a trick for a greenhorn to throw a hundred-pound pack on his head and mush a half-mile over the top of a hill. If anyone doubts my statement just try it. The strap fits across the forehead with the load resting on the back of the neck and shoulders. With every step taken, the load settles, increasing the tension on the strap until the head feels as if it would burst. Then if a misstep is made or a sharp stone is stepped on while wearing moccasins, the pack will surely flop a man down. He can't stand the extra twitch that his already strained neck will get from the sudden jolt. The Indians would make two trips to our one; we were not over-anxious to even keep our own pace.

The Indians pride themselves in seeing in how short a time they can make a trip over and back, and how much they can pack on their backs. But their powers of endurance are not as great as a white man's. We had to have a pot of beans and a lot of tea always ready; they would stop every two hours to eat a bite and rest for a half hour or so, then into it furiously again.

Before we got over these portages we had gotten into the habit of eating little and often, and found it to be ahead of waiting until the usual meal time to eat. Usually at hard work such as packing the hardest hour of the day was about an hour before mealtime.

At each "bad river" we would go around and size up the reason why of the portage. In every case a moment's view of the scene would banish all thoughts of taking the chance of running the rapids. We did not wonder that the Indians used a good deal of caution in making a landing just a short distance above. Should they miss a landing and go over one of the falls, surely everyone would be killed before he had a chance to drown.

Opposite the Mountain portage, the third one, the water drops straight down for 70 feet, right on top of big rocks. Our whole outfit, boat and all, had to be packed up over a hill about 500 feet high at this place, hence the name.

The last portage was more in the form of a shoot-the-chutes, where we had to pack over only about half of our load. The boat with its crew of Indians and two or three of the boys made the run over the roughest part of water of the whole Mackenzie River route. The water tore through like a millrace, drop after drop, over aprons, around and among monster boulders, at a speed that no man could run against.

There were only two Indians in the whole country who would tackle piloting a boat through that stretch of water. Not until one of them died, would another try it, as someone had to take his place. We engaged these two pilots to bring us through, an old man and his son, who also put all the Hudson's Bay Company's boats through.

During times when not engaged by the company, these two Indians would take their canoe and prospect around in here for a better channel. They found one once, at this last portage, where a small boat could be taken down with a lot less danger than in the place where the larger boats were taken through. But it was a very long and roundabout way, with a good deal of work pulling against the current in some places.

A number of years before, when a distinguished official of the Hudson's Bay Company from England was making a tour of the Mackenzie country, he engaged the pilot, Susie Boleio and his boy, to take his Peterboro canoe down through the rapids. Everything went fine until they got down to their new channel. While out paddling around among the boulders, up stream and down, they ran on top of a flat rock. The old man stepped out onto it to shove off. When he did so his weight lightened their boat enough so that it shot away leaving him on the rock a half mile from shore with a boiling current all around him. The boy, then only a young fellow, managed to get on through and out safe with the canoe. He quickly gave the alarm, but none could help him, for only he and his father had ever gone through this new way and they were the only ones that knew it.

The boy, acting as pilot, finally persuaded another to go with him, trusting to luck to find the right channel where he had left his father. They made four trials, getting within a stone's throw of the old man each time, but gradually gathering experience. From the point where they landed below the rapids each time, their birch bark canoe had to be packed through the woods for over a mile before starting again at the head of this series of rapids. On the fifth trip old Susie was picked off the rock. He had been standing on a stone in a foot of cold water for just eight hours.

Well, we got through without losing anybody or anything and the rejoicing that took place was such as I have never seen before or since, and all over the fact that it was the last bad place in the river, in the nature of rapids. But we still had Great Slave Lake to cross, which was considered quite dangerous on account of not having any harbors or shelters along its coast, on our route.

OUR VOYAGE ON GREAT SLAVE LAKE

ON ARRIVING at the Fort Smith post, just below the rough water, we were met by the post official and a Northwest Mounted Police, whose headquarters for that district was at that post. The Mountie gave us the once-over and asked if we had a very large cargo of rum on board (on account of the Indians getting it in trade for furs, etc.). He was told that there was probably one good drink for all hands around, including himself, left in one of the jugs. He produced a broad grin at that kind of a noise, and sat down to get the latest news from the outside. A fine fellow was that traffic cop. We met him again later when we made a trip down the river to Fort Simpson.

Leaving Fort Smith on the morning of September 15, we experienced all kinds of weather from snowstorms to midsummer suns during the four days' passage to Fort Resolution, on Great Slave Lake. The river enters the lake some 12 miles east of the harbor in which the fort is situated. The lake was quite calm when we started across the big bay to the town. When we had sailed out about six miles into the bay the wind suddenly whipped up from the sea, driving us straight forward toward a rocky point with the sea getting rougher every minute. It was only through luck and good steering that we glided past those rocks amid heavy seas, straight on to shelter. We began to think reports about the lake's being dangerous were not exaggerated.

Perhaps such treatment at the hands of the elements in the first 12 miles was only a sample of what would happen before we got clear across the 250 miles of shoreline yet to be dealt with. It was fortunate for us that we reached the fort by night. It rained and snowed, with a hard wind blowing straight across the lake from the north. But during that time all hands enjoyed themselves and learned useful lessons.

The Hudson's Bay man entertained us royally, giving us dinner every day. The evenings were spent in exchange of yarns, for the most part by our host.

The Catholic missionary interested us often with the recital of his experiences in that country where he had lived as a missionary for 29 years. The little old wiry Frenchman, having endured many hardships, was loved by all who knew him for the aid rendered to those in need, particularly among the Indians. He would journey for days and days, with little food, in the cold of winter, for some poor Indians reported as starving and sick, often returning from their camp with only half enough grub to take him back home. Three different times he did that. He lost his way in snowstorms; his grub ran out; he had to eat his moccasins and skins to keep life in him. At onther times he had to kill a dog out of his team for grub to bring the others home. All these stories were corroborated by the Indians and others.

Among the many interesting yarns spun during our stay there, was one by the Northwest Mounted Police, whose headquarters was at the post, and whose beat covered a radius of 1,000 miles. He said that one time an Indian of the post had taken a sled load of grub to some starving Indian camp away back about 125 miles into the timber. On his return, at one of his night camps, his dogs got into a fight and injured one animal's leg so that he was useless in the team. The Indian was so mad at the dog for starting the fight that he tied him to a tree and left him.

When he returned to the post, of course he boasted around as to what he had done and soon the Mountie heard it. That was enough. The Mountie rounded up the Indian, had him put a pack on his back, grabbed a pair of snowshoes, and started back on the trail to where the poor dog was tied. For fast mushing on snowshoes no one can beat those Mounted Police. The Mountie kept close on the heels of the Indian at a fast pace. They got back the night of the second day, after traveling a distance of nearly 100 miles. The Indian carried the dog on his back all the way. The dog was still alive and hungry. Using this as an object lesson, the Police had no more trouble with Indians leaving their dogs tied up out on the trails. They know there is no use trying to put one over on the Mounties. They are hard men to get away from when on the trail of a man.

Fort Resolution was the seat of operations for the great land of Barren Grounds. Here they outfitted expeditions going into that country, which lies on the north side of the lake about 80 miles away. Fort Ray is located on that side near the edge, or timber limit, of the Barren Lands, the home of the musk ox. For over 1,000 miles north, clear to the Arctic Ocean, and ranging from 100 to 600 miles in width. there is not one sign of a tree or wood of any description. The low rolling hills and ridges, covered with the northern moss and wire grass, is the unhampered home of the Barren Land caribou and musk ox. The latter stays entirely in the interior, and is the most difficult animal to get, owing to the inaccessible country, and is hunted only by specimen hunters. The Indians do not venture that far inland, not having had the experience in traveling without a fire, nor the proper equipment for long voyages such is used by adventurous white men. The marshy sloughs and bogs made it impossible to travel in summer, and in winter the bleak treeless stretches were a straight pathway for the Arctic winds and blinding blizzards that never ceased.

In a book entitled *Thirty-two Hundred Miles on Snow Shoes*, Casper Whitney, who made a trip some 500 miles into the Barren Lands, gives some interesting information regarding the conditions in that country. He went prepared to explore its depths, but, even with his modern equipment, was unable to carry out his full object, owing to the severe weather.

His grub was of the kind that would not freeze, such as pemmican, which is dried and pounded moose meat, rolled into balls with deer grease, and readily eaten without being cooked. Occasionally he built a fire to get a hot mug of tea or coffee at such times as the wind would let up enough so that he could get his tent up.

He started on the trip with 7 Indians and 27 dogs; he returned with his Indians but only 7 dogs. The rest had died from the severe cold and fatigue. His object was to get a specimen of a musk ox head, which he got, and material to write up the true nature of that unknown country.

The caribou that inhabits that country confines its pasture to the edge and near the timber, and is unlike any other northern caribou. It is very large, having legs of a moose, the body of a deer, and the antlers of a reindeer. The Indians are superstitious about these caribou and will not kill any that are full grown.

The calves are trapped by means of a squaw sitting very still, covered over with some bright colored shawl, attracting the attention or curiosity of the animals. As they never hear the report of a gun or have occasion to become frightened, they will investigate any strange object. The calves, gaining courage by the presence of the larger ones, will come so close that the squaw will stab him in the heart, never causing any commotion among the herd. The skins of the calves are used only for baby clothes.

About 50 miles from the edge of the Barren Lands is what is called the Land of Little Sticks. It is as nature provided it—a last chance to get wood loaded on to go into the interior. The Land of Little Sticks is a stretch of small scrub spruce, about 100 yards wide and miles and miles in length, that the fires had killed off and it stood dry as a bone. The Indians made frequent trips out to this limit.

It was on the eastern coast of this plain and between it and the northwestern corner of Hudson's Bay, that Sir John A. Franklin and his party met their fate, as their camping grounds and quarters were afterwards found.

On a previous expedition, as Captain Franklin, he spent two years in the vicinity of the lower Mackenzie River, making frequent visits up to Fort Simpson, which place I will mention later. One of his cabins, in which he wintered, still stands on the Bear River near the mouth of the Great Bear Lake, which lies on the northwestern side of the Barren Lands. Mr. Campbell, the Hudson's Bay official at Fort Simpson, has in his possession some of Captain Franklin's luggage bags with his name plates on them. He had left them at the fort during his first voyage into the country.

His first two voyages were seasoned with hardships, as the stories handed down from his time bear evidence. On many occasions he narrowly escaped the fate that ended his career in his third and last expedition.

Great Slave Lake has an area of approximately 20,000 square miles with an occasional island near its shores, and a very rocky beach all along the course we had to take.

Having put in four very pleasant days at Fort Resolution, we were just beginning to find out what kind of talent there was in the party. We had a magician, a Negro impersonator, a hypnotist, a strong man, a political economist orator, a poet and a Democrat. With such talent in one aggregation the time did not drag.

We were getting down into a country now where dogs were the pride of the nation. If you kicked a man's dog, no matter under what circumstances, you had a fight on your hands, and if you were too big for him to tackle you gained his enmity. But the owner himself was privileged to beat his dogs unmercifully without one word of censure. Usually in the summertime, which is the dog's holiday, they had to hunt their own feed. I mean by that, they had to catch their own fish.

In a small camp of only a few houses, and with grub so expensive, there were not many scraps thrown out. There were usually half a hundred dogs just a degree or so above the starvation point hanging around to grab up an old moccasin or snowshoe and run for the woods where they would not have to share it with 20 other dogs or lose an ear or a chunk out of their jaws while eating it.

The native dogs were of the wolf family, the grey species, with sharp pointed ears, head erect, big bushy tails and an ungovernable propensity for fighting. Their bite was a quick snap. They would

The town of Dawson (Canada) in 1899.

Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

OFFICE AT
AURORA DOCK
BONANZA KING
ELDOR

bite an outside dog half a dozen times while the latter was sparring for an opening. But the outside dogs would lick them in the end as the Indian dogs do not understand the meaning of the hang-on method that our dogs used in their tactics.

The sea got calmed down by noon of the fourth day so that we could venture out past the breaker line. We reached Thirty-mile Island that night, which was a little out of our course, but would afford us a shelter until morning as our start was too late to make the mouth of a river where the usual stops were made.

For ages the driftwood had been dumped on this island. Boy-like, we had to have a bonfire. We burned up about 500 cords in one vast blaze, illuminating the heavens, visible for 50 miles.

Our usual luck prevailed next day, in the form of another storm. We had to remain there all day, watching our boats lest they smash up. The back swells from behind an island were no laughing matter during a raging high sea, and they were only a short distance out from us. Having a lot of wood and no people to visit with, all hands took to getting out their monthly wash. Being inexperienced as to what should and what should not be boiled, when our wash was out, it displayed a multitude of varied colors. Each man's garment had a peculiar tint of its own.

Next morning a fair wind took us kiting along the coast to Buffalo River some 60 miles away. Our approach to the river was attended with some excitement as there was a heavy surf by this time. Going in over a bar the boat struck the rocks several times but they did no serious damage.

WE REACH FORT SIMPSON

THE NIGHTS were getting chilly now, sometimes freezing the small puddles over, and when it did not freeze we usually had a cold rain. Every chance we had to sleep on shore at night we took advantage of. With our tent and stove we would settle down for a comfortable night's rest after being smoked out a few times. The old stove, which was called a "knock down," was only intended for use out of doors. It was constructed of sheet iron so that it could be taken apart, thereby reducing space about nine-tenths. For about three times this worked fine; after that we had to take it apart with an ax.

It was no small trick to set up a fair sized tent when you did not know how to go about it. Several men, watching with the object of learning the art, all had suggestions to make so as not to display their ignorance. The star performer in this operation was tolerant up to a certain point. When his patience reached the exploding point, he would exclaim: "If you birds don't like my style, do it yourselves!"

We pulled out of Buffalo River the next morning and proceeded up the coast. There was a light wind offshore and on our port bow so we had to pull on the oars. There was a point 12 miles up the coast, back of which we could get shelter, and on this goal our hearts were set. All along the beach the going was most dangerous except in very calm weather. We got along fine for about 11 miles, when a change in the wind took place and it blew right in from the sea. We rowed hard and got to within a quarter of a mile of the harbor entrance. But pull as we might, for the wind and high seas were straight off our bow, we could not get a foot farther.

To head for the shore right there was out of the question, so we turned around, put up a reefed sail, and headed back for Buffalo River, the point we started from in the morning. To tell the truth we did not figure on getting out of that scrape without a good ducking. By the time we had made these 11 miles—the sea carrying whitecaps and the boat shipping water over her sides, splashing everybody and everything, and a cold north wind blowing—we came to the conclusion that our craft would be on the rocks before getting half way or we would be frozen stiff before reaching the river.

It took four men on relief at the steering oar, one man at the sail, one bailing water and one, Frenchy, acting as a splash board by lying along the edge of the boat to keep the waves from swamping us. The canoe, being towed along at the side, also filled with water; its paddles had floated away; we had to hoist it and load it up on the boat. Having stood this treatment for over an hour, we finally pulled back into the mouth of the river from which we started that morning, none the worse except for the loss of the canoe paddles. Of course, everything got wet, but everything had been wet two or three times before. But oh, such numbness! No one could talk. Standing still for an hour in wet clothes and a cold wind was sufficient excuse to tap the courage can.

In following us up the coast the other crew could not row as fast as we of the Big 7 and got two miles behind. They saw us turn, so they put back opposite a small stretch of sandy beach and headed straight into it. And they had everything packed ashore before the sea could do any more than just bunt their scow farther and farther up on shore.

We lay by in this place for two days, hoping for the best. It came one morning in the form of a fair wind that drove us down the lake about 125 miles of fine sailing right into Hay River Harbor, where there is a Methodist mission and a small village of Indians. Mr. Marsh, the missionary, conducted a training school for the Indian and Eskimo children, who came from as far as the Arctic Ocean. Our crew will not forget Mr. Marsh for the hospitality shown us during our short stay with him—nor will we forget how sweet his imported cow's milk was.

The Hudson's Bay Company's Mackenzie River and Slave Lake steamer was expected up from below most any time on her last trip and Mr. Marsh suggested that, should the boat get in before we left, we see the captain and ask for a tow across the bay which was only 30 miles. It was 70 miles around by the shoreline to the mouth of the Mackenzie River, the route that we would have to take if we made it without the steamer. So we decided to wait and take a chance, as the steamer had to call there.

After waiting two days, a steamboat whistle greeted our ears in the middle of the night. We at once aired our grievances to the captain and he agreed to pull us over to the mouth of the river for $12, early the next morning before the wind rose. He pulled out the next morning with four scows in tow, ours and two others of the Hudson's Bay Company to be left at the fishing islands just at the foot of the lake.

All the forts in this vicinity, within 500 miles, got their winter's supply of fish at these islands. The very last thing, just before the ice begins to run, these boats are sent up there and filled with whitefish, and drift down stream to their respective posts. Just at this time is the spawning season of the fresh water whitefish. A scow can be loaded in two days with 3,000 fish, each weighing four to six pounds. A half dozen Indians with a dozen fish nets will catch 20,000 fish in three days.

The Big 7 got into the Mackenzie at last, but it was on the first of October. We were six days reaching Fort Providence, not all fine sailing by any means. Snowstorms were of daily occurrence and there were hard frosts at night. We ran up against some propositions that were not on the program.

We had to leave our boats in calm water at night, out of the way of the ice drifting down in the current, and they would freeze in, making it difficult to get loose in the morning. Once we were half a day chopping her out to the channels. Again we failed to find a suitable place to land before darkness came on. It was almost impossible to find a place where the river was not full of moving ice. All the little calm water spots were frozen out to the edge of the running water. All we could hear (we could see nothing), was the constant grating and grinding of the ice moving along against the shore ice. We would see what we thought to be a point and possibly a shelter and pull for it. But on investigation it would prove to be the usual 20 or 30 feet of shore ice. It was two a.m. when we succeeded in making a landing at the mouth of a small river.

"All right—which one of you hollered 'Whoa'?"

THE TRAIL OF '98.

Photo Courtesy W. D. MacBride

Summit of Chilkoot Pass; 35,000 climbed it in 1898. Supplies were packed on backs and piled as in photo, with a stake bearing owner's name stuck in the snow. These were called "caches."

It was exceedingly dangerous to travel at night in drifting ice where it crowds one over to the solid stationary ice with a heavy pack pushing in the sides of the boat, and all this taking place in pitch darkness. None of us knew enough to protect the boat by putting on "weather boards" for the ice to jam against.

We stopped only about an hour at Fort Providence, after spending five days going the 180 miles from Hay River, and were anxious to reach Fort Simpson before pulling in for the winter.

After a day or so the weather moderated and made it better all around. We made the 230 miles from Fort Providence to Fort Simpson in six days, arriving there on the eleventh day of October. Two months had been spent on the trip and only about one-third of the journey covered.

The river apparently being good yet, and nearly free from ice because of the warm weather of the last few days, we were anxious to proceed down to the Nehanni River, 91 miles farther, and winter there, possibly to do some prospecting in the mountains during the winter and also to be out from the post where the fur would probably be more plentiful. But on reconsidering the matter, the advantages, social and material, and the kindness of Mr. Campbell, chief of the whole Mackenzie River district for the Hudson's Bay Company, in offering us the use of a large cabin free for the winter, we unanimously decided that Simpson would be the Big 7 headquarters, and straightway proceeded to make it so.

WE MAKE FRIENDS

OUR POET'S partner, Joe English, one of the two men we picked up in the rapids and who traveled with us down to Fort Simpson, separated from our party. He was fortunate enough to get a job with the English missionary there as general utility man; he held down the job until spring, when he joined the rush of gold seekers.

Fort Simpson is the largest of all the Hudson's Bay posts, being the distributing center for the whole Mackenzie River district, and is situated at the mouth of the Liard River, the flow of which nearly equals that of the Mackenzie. The Liard opposite the fort was a mile wide.

There were two missions there, a Protestant and a Roman Catholic. The Hudson's Bay Company had three large warehouses and a two-story dwelling of whip-sawed lumber. They had cost the poor half-breed many a hard day's work at about the rate of 50 cents a day. There was a population of about 75. Seventeen of them were white; the rest were French half-breeds and full-blooded Slavie Indians. Also there were dogs equal in number to the human population.

Our cabin was of good size, 14 by 16, and gave us plenty of room. After building four bunks along the wall, we had room for a table, several chairs, a cook stove and a large cast-iron heater, which was kindly lent us by the Father of the Catholic mission.

Stoves were a rarity down in that country and our cabin was not built to accommodate such luxury. The old-fashioned fireplace in it had to be abandoned as it fairly ate up the wood. We could not accustom ourselves to the Indian maxim for keeping warm: "White-man, big fire, stand far away; Indian fire, get on top."

There was a cellar under the cabin where Mr. Campbell kept his surplus potatoes, his "famine fund" in case of a failure in the Indians' grub pile, which might happen during the winter when "long time no wind" (which I will explain later on). In removing these spuds we were privileged to keep a portion so we had green spuds all winter.

Mr. Campbell had a five-acre lot which he had planted to potatoes every spring, and owing to the quality of the soil and short season they never reached maturity, seldom being larger than eggs. He gathered his winter supply, leaving the rest for the Indians to dig for themselves. The full-blood Siwash, instead of digging out enough in the fall to do him for the winter, would go out only when obliged to; and sometimes on a cold morning in mid-winter squaws could be seen chopping potatoes out of the frozen ground for their morning meal. Sometimes for two or three days they would not have a particle of meat in their camp. Without this potato patch Mr. Campbell would have had to feed them constantly. They would not go out and hunt if they could get white man's grub by begging. Their lot was not to be envied. They were small, withered and inoffensive people with just ambition enough to keep from starving. Their tribal boundaries were only a few hundred miles apart, with a different language outside those limits.

Great Slave Lake was named after this tribe. A tribal war occurred on one of its islands, resulting in terrible loss to the Slavies. Much of the deterioration of the tribe was due, some say, to the introduction of the white man's food and habits. Sickness was unknown to them before the paleface invaded their seclusion. They numbered less by nine-tenths than at the time the Hudson's Bay Company first established itself on the Mackenzie.

The custom of the Company some years ago, in order to keep their white men at their posts for a lifetime, was to go into the rural districts of England and Scotland and hire boys about 16 years old and take them into the north country as apprentices for a period of eight years, after which time they were allowed to visit back home.

After rounding out eight years under the wild and uncivilized influences that were so different from their home life, usually a short stay back home was sufficient, and they would return to the north country and its primitive life which they had learned to like. Usually, on their return to their trading posts, they would marry a half-breed girl and settle down to this mode of life. And as the older hands died off they took their places in charge of the posts.

Thus Mr. Campbell and his assistant, Joe Irwin, began life. Mr. Campbell had been more than 60 years in this north country. At this time, at this Fort Simpson post they had a young Scotch boy who had been with them only two years. He had enjoyed it very much so far, but at times he said he was desperately homesick.

The gold rush of so many white men down past all those trading posts completely changed the old order of things and kindled new ambitions in the hearts of those younger traders. By staying with their posts they saw before them a life of solitude. The following spring some of them joined the big rush of prospectors and journeyed on into the Klondike and Alaska.

Many a cold night we spent that winter sitting around the cabin fire listening to the yarns and tales of adventure those two old men, one Scotch and the other English, would tell. Campbell, the Englishman, was given somewhat to elaboration in his remarks if personal achievements figured in the case.

They had quite a large library, billiard and pool table, all sorts of games and a dance hall. Joe, the Scotchman, had developed the art of taxidermy. He had beautifully mounted specimens of every animal, fowl and fish of that country. Thus with the many opportunities we had for amusement to while away the time, the winter passed very quickly.

Once a week or so some of the party would strike out for a hunt, always a moose hunt, the very hardest animal in the country to find. The hunters always returned very tired, out of grub, and with no game.

To successfully hunt moose one must be prepared to stay out for three days unless by accident a stray moose should get in close to camp. With enough grub and his blankets on his back, his snowshoes and his gun, he should be amply trained to hike 30 to 60 miles. The moose is a fast traveler and should the wind cease to blow, the hunter would be entirely out of business. The moose always travels against the wind, thereby detecting any possible approaching danger by a keen sense of smell. Before the animal lies down to rest in the thick of the timber and deep snow, he circles around, covering an arc of a half mile, continues around a couple of times, then lies down in the center of this circle, leaving exposed to him the scent of the hunter of this trail to windward, giving time for the animal to scurry off in another direction before the hunter gets in range.

The Indians are equal to any tricks of the game, which is their bread of life. As soon as they see moose tracks in a circle starting, they will retreat for a distance then cut across and reach the inner circle again, and so on, keeping on the down wind side of their game until within gun shot. The hunter must use the utmost caution to avoid breaking any branches and must maintain a noiseless tread with his snowshoes in order not to alarm the moose, as they are always ready to run at the least sign of danger.

I once went out with an Indian and a dog team to haul in a moose he had killed, and saw where he stood when he shot his game. The Indian had sidestepped him on the circle act and crept up to within 15 feet before making a noise so the animal could rise on its feet before being shot.

The old style gun used by the natives is a single barrel muzzle loader with powder and ball and is no sure shot. They took no chances in losing their game by shooting haphazard. The moose was then skinned and cut up, hung up in a tree—excepting the heart, which the hunter always took into camp. Next day, if not too far away, the squaws would take dog teams and go after the meat. The buck Indian did nothing more in the preparation of the meat, his share having been done in the hunting and killing of it.

Toward spring was the best time to hunt moose, when the day's sun softened the snow enough to form a hard crust during the night when it freezes. The hunter takes his dogs and sled, the crust being sufficiently strong to bear up his outfit. On his snowshoes he could get along at a rapid rate while the heavy moose would sink to the ground with every step, sometimes in snow so deep that it was almost impossible for him to travel. In many instances, being hard pressed, he would leave a blood stained trail as a result of being cut by the crust on the snow.

The usual winter's snow averages a depth of three or four feet. Without snowshoes one could not travel off the beaten trails, which were few; in fact there were none outside the immediate vicinity of the post. Often I have seen boys with ordinary snowshoes flounder by stepping too far to one side of the trail, the snow being so light they would go right to the bottom. The hunters use a 5½-foot snowshoe.

Some of our boys were experienced on snowshoes and some were not. I being among the latter, can testify it is no light matter for the novice to navigate on a pair of five-footers. Just where the snow was deepest one shoe would step on the other and over we'd go into the soft snow. We never realized that snow was so soft until we tried to get right side up again. After a few such experiences one learned to throw them around in good shape and could cut wood, build campfires, or do anything with them on.

We took in with us a big bunch of steel traps to use during the winter. We set out a trap line covering about a 15-mile course. Every third day someone would make the rounds and gather up the furs, if there were any to gather. At any rate we counted up some 30-odd marten skins and two beavers in the spring.

KEEPING BUSY IN A NORTHERN WINTER

THE INDIAN makes his traps with a deadfall made of a few poles. That was the only trap suitable for a cold climate. The animal getting into a steel trap is not killed as it is in a deadfall. The foot or leg that is caught in the trap will freeze as the circulation is stopped, and lose all sense of feeling. To free himself the animal will chew off the part caught.

We visited our traps one day and could see where there had been a real tussle and found the paw of a marten had been chewed off. The trap was set and baited again and the paw taken into camp. On our next trip around the marten belonging to the paw was found in the same trap, having come back to investigate, perhaps. We also caught one ermine which was white as snow.

The natives had a queer custom of throwing the carcass of a marten up on top of their cabins until it dried and withered. Under no circumstances, even though starving, would they eat a marten. We ate everyone we caught and considered it a luxury, as they are the cleanest animal to be had. Their skins were worth two dollars or "four skins."

The term, skin, is used as a medium of exchange and originated years ago when beaver skins brought 50 cents each. Ever since then the beaver has been the standard, establishing the skin at a relative value of 50 cents, in place of our currency system. An Indian would get, in exchange for a $5.00 bearskin, its equivalent at the rate of 50 cents a skin for ten skins.

The prices of food varied during the winter months, or rather advanced, owing to the scarcity of the articles. Flour in the early winter was $20 a bag of 100 pounds and advanced to $40 a bag by spring. Fortunately we did not have to buy flour. But loaf sugar at 50 cents a pound crawled up to 75 cents a pound, and everything rose in proportion. Canned goods were 75 cents or a dollar each.

Our larder was pretty well cleaned out of so-called luxuries long before the winter was over. To satisfy our longing for something delicate once in a while, we would have to pay their fancy prices. When there was any extra grub, other than the usual run of prepared soup, rice, bacon and bread, it would be each man for himself. An outsider would have been amused at our preparation of a meal. We would each go to our bunks and haul out some delicacy that had been hidden. Each man had a different kind of "goo" such as jam, syrup, loaf sugar, beef tea, canned fruit or salmon.

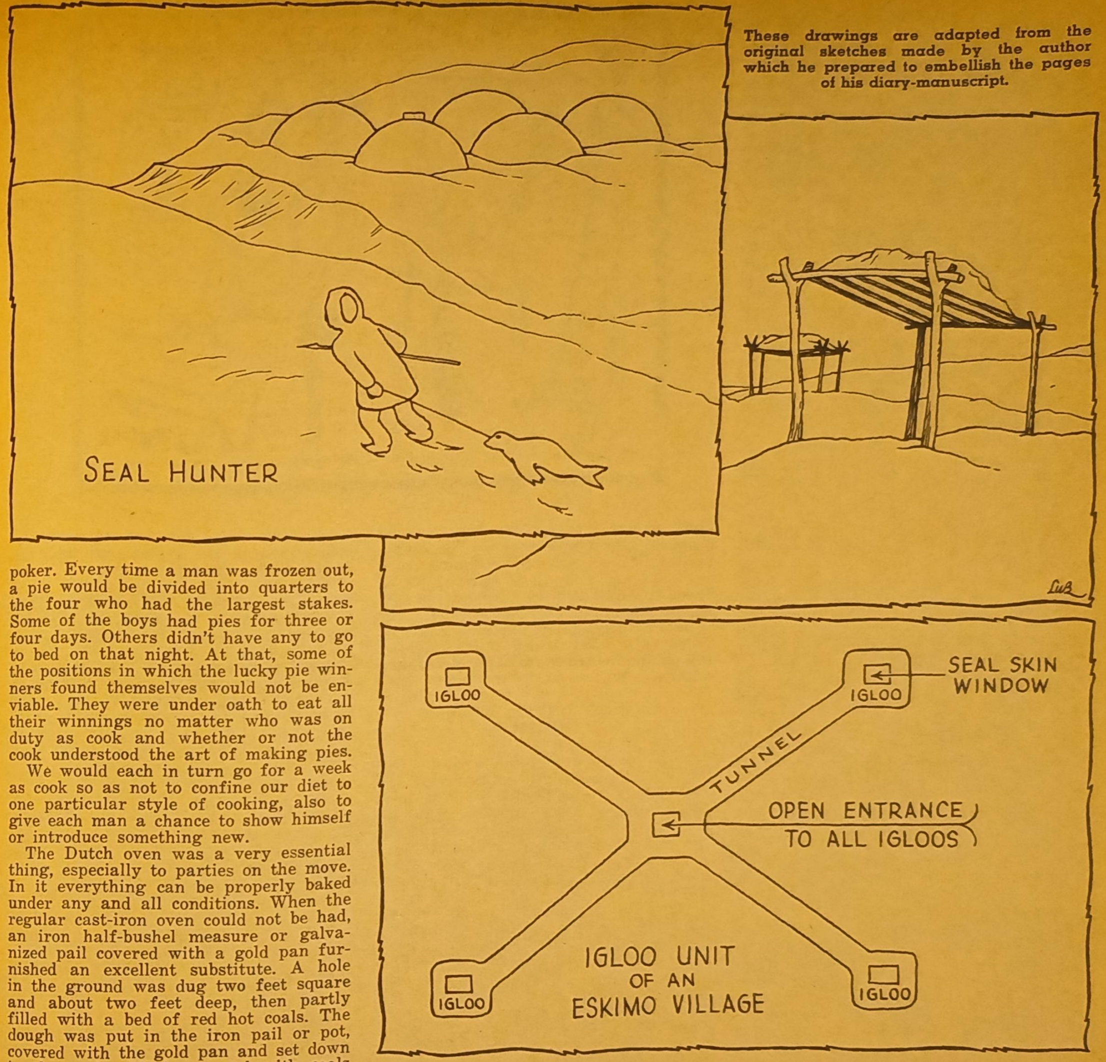
To while away the long winter evenings, cards were the chief attraction. But to play the same game night after night grew tiresome, so the lump sugar system was introduced. Many an unsweetened cup of coffee had to be drunk as the result. We placed an easy limit on the poker game with a two-lump ante. As loaf sugar was the nearest thing to money in value and was also negotiable, it was a cinch for even change in making bets.

Occasionally we would have a pie concert, that is, a poker game for pie. On these occasions the cook would bake up about half as many pies as there were men, and there was always a full house. Then we'd start a game of freeze out poker. Every time a man was frozen out, a pie would be divided into quarters to the four who had the largest stakes. Some of the boys had pies for three or four days. Others didn't have any to go to bed on that night. At that, some of the positions in which the lucky pie winners found themselves would not be enviable. They were under oath to eat all their winnings no matter who was on duty as cook and whether or not the cook understood the art of making pies.

A wooden scow, such as that used by the author and party, fighting its way through the dangerous rapids of rivers of the Far North.

Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

These drawings are adapted from the original sketches made by the author which he prepared to embellish the pages of his diary-manuscript.



Sketch at upper left depicts an Eskimo hunter returning with his catch to his temporary ice-and-snow igloo, constructed for use only while hunting on the ice pack near the seal "blow" holes. The center drawing shows a burial rack used by the Eskimos near the westernmost point on the North American continent, Cape Prince of Wales (called Cape of York by the author) when he was in that area in 1898. Below is shown an igloo layout, sketched at village visited by the author, the first white man the natives had seen.

We would each in turn go for a week as cook so as not to confine our diet to one particular style of cooking, also to give each man a chance to show himself or introduce something new.

The Dutch oven was a very essential thing, especially to parties on the move. In it everything can be properly baked under any and all conditions. When the regular cast-iron oven could not be had, an iron half-bushel measure or galvanized pail covered with a gold pan furnished an excellent substitute. A hole in the ground was dug two feet square and about two feet deep, then partly filled with a bed of red hot coals. The dough was put in the iron pail or pot, covered with the gold pan and set down in the coals. All is covered with coals and dirt to maintain an even temperature. The dough crust would bake to an even brown but would not burn. The product would come from the oven steaming and evenly baked.

The Hudson's Bay Company had a large stationary oven built of rock and mortar that would bake 25 loaves at a time, which we occasionally used for some big doin's. It required a heap of wood to heat it up and we had to furnish the wood, so we didn't use it very often. The wood was fired right into the oven, and when the oven was nearly red hot the fire was pulled and the dough put in.

We had often been cautioned about exposing ourselves or making it anyway liable for the "northern black plague" (scurvy) to get in among the party. Plenty of exercise was the best remedy and preventative; fresh meat and vegetables would help; but when the latter could not be had, we had to resort to hard work.

The chief cause of scurvy is the inactive indoor life, eating the heavy coarse grub that a prospector requires to work on in summer and also with the appetite that the cold northern climate demands. Crawling into a bunk with a full stomach of pork and beans, with no daily exercise, was sure to bring on scurvy.

We laid out a daily course of exercise. Each day except Sunday each man except the cook took his hand sleigh, went two miles back to a dry patch of spruce timber, cut a small jag of wood and hauled it into camp.

This operation was gone through nearly every day all winter long. Of course we picked out a trail that was more or less hazardous, after the fun we had on the river coming down. There were two very steep hills on this wood trail. We'd load a sled with wood, a couple of us would pile on top and let 'er go, regardless of disaster at the foot of the hill. In nine cases out of ten it was pick up and load on again.

We used a rack on the sled and lashed our load on. Our moosehide lashings were usually broken and had to be replaced before the next trip out. The old lashings were boiled up for dog feed.

It was necessary that the sleds be kept up in a tree or on a rack, as the half starved Indian dogs would soon strip them of their lashings to satisfy their hunger.

The sleighs used in the Mackenzie country were of the toboggan type, flat bottomed and about eight feet long, made of birch. This is the only style that can be used in the back country owing to the condition of the trails. The traffic is so small that there were no well defined trails. A sled with runners would sink its full depth, adding to the troubles of the musher, whose nerves were already strung to the limit.

During the ice flows in the late fall when the Mackenzie River and others set fast, the ice cakes pile up on end and freeze in, making it impossible to travel with any degree of comfort. The receding of the flow of water during the long winter would sink the ice down in midstream, causing ice near the bank, where the trail runs, to slope down dangerously. Flat-bottomed sleds were a sorry proposition to man and dog on these trails as they were constantly skidding sideways and tipping over.

In the latter part of November we decided to break the monotony of shanty life by taking a trip. We also wanted to explore the Nehanni River and to visit a party of Frenchmen. These men were living in a cabin on the Nehanni and had been prospecting in that vicinity and on the upper Nehanni River for a year or more. Four of us, Sparks, the Poet, Frenchy and myself, began preparing for a 15-day trip.

We lacked experience in putting up an outfit for that kind of traveling, but it was only with hardship that we became aware of the fact. We had no dogs and supposed it a small trick to haul our own sleds. We loaded two with everything that we thought would be needed. To make sure we would have enough meat we loaded 80 pounds of bacon.

We pulled out on the morning of December 3. The thermometer stood at 10° below zero; and each sled had a load of 200 pounds packed as best we knew how. The men at the post gave us the laugh and said we wouldn't last out three days with that load. They did pull hard even at the start, but we had to make a good showing while near the post.

Before we were three miles on our way, those loads were taken off and gone through to see what could be dispensed with to make them lighter. One had only to try it, to find out what a seemingly dead weight it is to pull a 200-pound load on a flat sled for miles and miles through soft snow. The constant strain of pulling where every step seemed like another pound being added to the load forced us to stop often to catch our breath. Being overheated, the cold atmosphere got in its work on us in the form of a chill. We cached some of our load up in a tree, but when night came on the load seemed still heavier. After that hard first trek we made camp only six miles from the post.

One thing in our favor was the short day. It was light at this time of the year for only about 7 hours out of the 24, and we always had to halt in sufficient time to make up our camp before dark.

The system of camp making used by the old-time mushers was an unknown quantity to us. Tents were never used by them in their winter traveling. They added weight to the load; camp could be made better and in less time without them.

"I finally cured that old heifer of swishing her tail in my face!"

A bunch of thick green spruce is spotted near dry standing timber, if possible, and a snow trail is broken through to it. Half of the crew gathers dry wood by chopping down pole timber. The others prepare the campsite by tramping down the snow, putting in a thick layer of green spruce boughs to walk on and making a back wall for a bedroom. The poles are dragged in, the ends piled up from each side, worm fence fashion. About half a cord is sufficient for a night's camp.

WE ENCOUNTER WINTER HARDSHIPS

FIRE was started while we were standing on the boughs so as not to get wet feet from melting snow. The bean pot, bread and other things were placed near the fire to thaw. One shook the snow out of his bedding to provide a seat, cut a slice or two of stiff bacon, and watched the snow water pail lest it tip over into the fire.

When we started out on this trip we knew nothing of the proper way to pitch a camp and our first half dozen nights were wonders. We did just the opposite of the above in nearly every case. We would build our fire first, stand around and get wet feet before the bed was made. The fire would melt a hole and would soon be out of reach. Somebody would step on the end of a log and upset the grub.

We took along three of those abominable sleeping bags. After a couple of nights of nearly freezing I ripped the blankets out of the bags and doubled up with the Poet in his blankets. We cached the remainder of the bags along with 30 pounds of bacon up in a tree until our return trip. One night we experimented with a "clam bake bed." A good big fire warmed the ground we intended sleeping on. It worked very fine the first night and we thought the problem was solved.

The next night we raked the fire off to one side and made our shakedown on the warm earth. In fact it was steaming for I remember it smelled like a laundry an hour or two after we went to bed.

But that was not all. The bed had been made on a side hill and the fire had been pulled off on the upper side. All night the melting snow ran down into the blankets. Being tired we slept through it all, not dreaming that we were in a mud puddle. Next morning we found the bed soaked in the center and icy with frozen mud around the edges.

This trip was getting mighty tiresome, but we were determined to stick it out for if we returned we would be the laughing stock of the whole Mackenzie population.

Along some of the big cutbank stretches the river ice jammed and piled up 20 feet high in places, which would extend from bank to bank. We often had to crawl over this kind of a trail mile after mile, lifting our sleds half of the time.

We had been traveling two or three hours, one afternoon, hoping to spot a decent place to pull in for the night. We saw a likely looking place about a mile ahead, but a mile is a long distance toward evening with a load like we had. Dark was fast approaching and we knew that if we did not find a place soon it would be an all-night session with us as there was no wood along there for shelter. Finally we reached the point that looked like a good camp. It offered no inducement to stay. Rather than risk it any farther (it was so dark then that an object on the bank was scarcely distinguishable), we made camp. To their last days none of the boys will ever forget what they experienced that night.

We learned afterward that the thermometer registered 52° below zero that night, not unusual for that country; the next few days it hung around 40° and 45° below. But it overtook us in the very worst time on the trip. The snow was deep and there was nothing to burn but green willows and practically no shelter.

All cooked-up grub had been eaten. The attempt at cooking enough for even a scanty meal, with wood that required the utmost coaxing to burn under the best of conditions, was not very successful. The fire was so small that the frying pan monopolized the heating surface, and two feet away from it we would freeze. Some of the boys experienced the feeling of drowsiness that always precedes freezing to death.

On account of being so tired after a hard day's pull, although no part of their bodies froze, unnoticed by them they would chill. As the feeling of drowsiness came over them their first thought was of rest. Unless they were awakened very soon they would lose any sense of feeling. Two of our party had to be shaken to keep awake until they had something to eat. We all rolled in and covered over with snow and just a minute after were dead to the world, dreaming of railroads in a nice warm climate and lots of good things to eat.

It took us 13 days to go the 90 miles and then we didn't reach the Nehanni River. Of course it seemed more like a 190 miles. We came to a river that answered to the Nehanni's description, but failed to locate the Frenchman's cabin. We came to the conclusion that we had been misinformed. Our grub was running low. Of the 15 days' grub we had started with we already had eaten up 13 days' portion.

MORE WINTER ADVENTURES

IT HAD BEEN our intention to get a supply from the Frenchmen for the return trip. But the fact that we thought they had moved on downriver or up into the mountains gave us something new to think about. How to get home on two days' grub?

We started back at once. After two hours' travel we spied a cabin on the opposite side of the river about a mile away. Our troubles seemed suddenly over. Everybody took on a smile; our experiences were made light of. Then, nearing the cabin, we saw no smoke or sign of habitation. Instead of the Frenchmen's cabin, it was only an old deserted shack belonging to an Indian.

There was nothing to eat here, of course. But we stayed for nearly a day and a night, sleeping most of the time on a hard board floor. We used the old fireplace to cook up all the grub there was left, which wasn't very much. It was fortunate that we had cached our excess bacon in several places on the trip down. It would come in handy on the way back; we wouldn't starve anyway.

We passed two of our old camping grounds each day and nearly everyone bore some mark of a cache that was made on the way down. There were guns, tarpaulins, extra pots and pans, clothing, sleeping bags and strips of bacon. To lighten up our load one sled was hung up in a tree and all four of us hooked onto the other one. We walked right past everything except the bacon, making our assorted grub hold out as long as possible.

But grub somehow has a way of disappearing. We then had to resort to bacon straight. For three days our diet was bacon, fried, boiled, stewed, roasted, rare or well done. A teacup of bacon grease would be as eagerly sought after as a cup of tea. To begin with, our appetites were in first class order. To shove a double short on us such as this trip was doing, then cut off all rations at once and still keep pegging away on the trail, kept our thoughts on nothing but grub—mostly bread, bread, bread. I would willingly have paid a dollar a loaf to satisfy my longing for a slice of bread to go with our bacon.

We finally reached the home camp. But the last two days were not soon forgotten. We were 7 days on the trail coming back, 21 days on the whole trip. We arrived at the camp a tough looking outfit. Clothes were torn, trousers and leggings burnt, moccasins worn out, faces smeared with bacon grease.

At the last night's camp we cached nearly everything and packed only a few things in on our backs. As you might expect, we got the laugh from all the post men. From our description of the river they knew just how far we had gone; we had been within five miles of the Frenchmen's cabin when we turned homeward.

Creek claims on Eldorado and neighboring creeks in the Klondike yielded from $5.000 to $80.000 at their spring clean-up.

University of Washington Library

After being in camp for a few days on a regular diet our troubles were forgotten and the whole trip looked on as a huge joke. To have a surprise in store for our return from downriver the other boys had borrowed a 45-gallon barrel and with aid from here and there around the post had gathered the components for a "brew," or batch of sourdough beer, and had it working beautifully when we arrived home.

Forty-five gallons of sourdough beer was like a drop in the bucket when the time came for the big "potlatch," as it was an open secret in the town and everybody attended an "at home" in the Big 7 cabin.

Those with exceedingly large capacities were able to hold enough to produce the desired effect—that is, if they could disregard the taste. It was made up of sourbread dough, sugar, dried apples, hops, and hot water and allowed to stand in a warm place to ferment for about three weeks. In the due course the brew was reported ready.

Our cabin comfortably held about 25 men (standing room) but somehow over 50 of the male species, white, black, brown and red, arranged themselves in the open spaces and absorbed the barrel of brew as fast as the executive committee could dispense it. After about the third round, festivities opened, song and laughter echoed through the North Country, and happiness reigned supreme. All that could comfortably crowd into the cabin that night spent the evening playing poker with lump sugar as poker chips.

Our Christmas dinner was a grand affair, the very best the market afforded at any price. There were canned oyster soup, roast wild duck, stewed deer tongue, boiled moose nose and fish liver, baked whitefish and Siwash potatoes, cornstarch pudding with canned peach pie.

The Frenchmen from down the river, whom we had such a time trying to find, arrived at the fort the day before Christmas, just in time to get in on the big dinner. Before New Year's we all had decided on a new move.

A party was formed for the purpose of exploring the head of the Nehanni River with a view of finding a pass through the Rocky Mountains to the head of the Pelly River, one of the branches of the Yukon, thereby saving us hundreds of miles on the route down around by the Arctic Ocean.

Our plan was to locate, if possible, a pass through which some Indians had come years before during the summer, and which we thought would be a practicable one in the winter as well. We hoped we could portage our goods across before the snow melted, build a boat on the other side to have ready when the river broke up in the spring, and drift down easily and swiftly into the Yukon and Klondike.

One of the Frenchmen and myself were delegated for the trip. Taking about 30 days' grub and a three-dog team, we got started on January 3, 1898. Owing to heavy trails and the big load we had, for there had been no traffic to speak of over the trail that winter, we were just nine days reaching the 60 mile Indian camp, where there was a village of 19 natives precariously living, catching enough fish to keep body and soul together.

Taking pity on them, we ordered their largest pot. While every eye watched our movements, we prepared a mixture of boiled oatmeal and bacon. They, thinking perhaps it was our dog feed, had made no preparation toward getting dishes to eat from. When it was cooked Frenchy told them in their own language to get their plates. They scrambled to their tepees and came back with moosehide saucers, pot lids, wooden dishes of all shapes, anything that would hold mush and bacon. The feast didn't take much from us and it did their empty stomachs heaps of good.

We rested there for two days—cooped up with half a dozen dirty Indians in a brush tepee with an open fire in the center; children and dogs having access to everything left open.

These were called the Mountain Indians. They lived apart from the fort natives, dependent on their catch, subsisting for months and months entirely on meat and fish. So our presence was appreciated. By giving them these few things, as well as tobacco and tea, we gained their confidence.

To show their gratitude they sent out their best man as a guide for us, as we had about 80 miles to go before reaching the mountains at the head of the Nehanni River.

Once in a while their hunters would succeed in shooting a deer or moose to help out the fish problem. The night before we left, a couple of Indians who had been out for three days came into camp with the news that they had killed a deer. Next morning we pulled out with two of their dog teams for the deer, in a direct line on our trail. For two days we had a broken trail with a nice feed of venison at the end and a chunk of the meat to take along with us.

Building a fire in the prospect hole at night to thaw it for prospecting the next day.

University of Washington Library

In regard to traveling and making up comfortable night camps, I had learned valuable pointers since the last trip down the river. Frenchy was experienced in the art of camp life, so we had no difficulty in making a good night camp.

About a day's run from the fish camp I thought we were approaching a Frenchman's cattle corral by the look of the fences here and there. Our guide explained that these were wing fences to herd caribou in certain directions so that the Indian hunters of the early days with their bow and arrows, could get in close to make a sure shot. The hunters concealed themselves in a brush pile and waited until the caribou came wandering leisurely along this fence looking for an opening to get through. The fence was made by chopping down a half-mile line of small spruce trees across the general line of the game trails.

LOOKING FOR A PASS

THIS VAST country was heavily timbered with large spruce and fir trees, straight and tall. In places the trees were so close together that most of the snow had lodged in the branches, leaving the ground almost bare.

The trail wandered through the trees; it was like traveling under a roof; the light was cut off by the thick foliage and snow on the branches.

From the post back to the mountains, a distance of about 160 miles, extends a forest of the finest timber in the North. As one approaches the foothills the timber gets smaller and gradually thins out up to the timberline half way up the mountain peaks.

In this section there are several good-sized lakes and innumerable small ones. On our trip out we crossed over perhaps a dozen quite large lakes. As the trail approached each lake, the guide would cut three or four small green spruce trees and stick them in the snow in a line some distance from shore to indicate the trail for us on our return trip in case there was a snowstorm, when all landmarks look alike.

That area was just ordinary rolling land, much like our middle-west, and would make excellent farms if the seasons were longer and winters less severe.

One morning while mushing along through these big woods the men ahead scared up a ptarmigan and took a shot at it but missed. Two seconds after the shot they heard a commotion a few yards ahead and saw where a big bull moose had been sleeping. Fresh tracks led off into the timber. While I waited with the dog team the others took off to trail him. Frenchy said that old boy was sure going places. His tracks were ten feet apart.

In that thick timber we couldn't understand how he could get his big horns between the thickets that he went through at such a high speed. They followed his tracks for a mile or so but gave it up because by that time the moose could be eight or ten miles away. We might have had him if it hadn't been for shooting at that ptarmigan because there was no wind and we made very little noise in the soft snow.

After seven days of real hard going we reached the mountains and camped at the timber limit to investigate the nature of the ridges regarding firewood. We stayed there for three days and climbed a dozen or so of the high peaks endeavoring to see wood ahead, and counting ridge after ridge as far as the eye could see. Everything was as bald as a stone. We concluded it would be unwise to attempt a portage over this route. We proceeded to pack up and pull for home.

In packing up it was discovered that the grub pile was much lower than we expected. We forgot the nine days of the first section of trail and the grub eaten by the Indians at the fish camp.

There was not enough to run us back home. Barring accidents we could reach the fish camp and get food enough for the three day run that lay beyond.

Fortunately, after we had mushed some 30 miles on our way back, our guide noticed an Indian sign. He knew at once what it was. In this country when the natives kill big game during the summer, they strip the meat from the bones and dry it. They then camp right there until all the bones have been boiled and hidden up in a small tree. The tree must be one that the wolverines cannot climb. The natives then put up a sign—or make a lob stick. In this way they can find the hide and haul it home during the winter.

This sign was what our Siwash saw. It would help us. We would take some of this hide along for dog feed. A piece

Sluice box mining.

Photo Courtesy Mrs. L. O. Howard

about two by three feet in size was loaded on the sled to use as stated, also in extreme hunger as a life saver.

The trail was under a foot of soft snow which had fallen since our trip over it on the way out. Try as we might it was impossible to go fast, as we were already on rations in order to help out on the dog feed. It took us nine days to make the distance that we had covered in seven going out with a load. The last couple of days told us plainly that the Indians would have to help us out over the last six miles. So we managed to eat our last meal just before we pulled into the Indian fish camp.

When we arrived there the camp was deserted. Not a sign of a living soul. It was useless to scurry around in the hope of finding anything even as good as the piece of moosehide that was on the sled. The Indians and their dogs had lived there too long in a starving condition.

While prowling through the camp I noticed on top of a fish rack a couple of carcasses of marten that had probably been there for a year or so. All the meat had been eaten off by those northern blue jays—the whisky jack—so there was nothing left but the bones. Frenchy said: "By gar we take 'em—maybe eat 'em soup." And so we did. We boiled those bones in a pot and Frenchy and I had a fine soup. Our Indian guide wouldn't touch it on account of their ancient religious belief that the marten was sacred. After the bones didn't produce any more soup we parched them to a crisp and had another good meal out of them.

There we were, 60 miles from home and nothing to eat but that slab of moose rawhide. Our guide was quite unconcerned about it; he had been on rations frequently during the winter; had resorted to roots at times during other winters. The thought to us was anything but pleasant and I am sure it was unwelcome news to the dogs. After pulling and wallowing through the snow all day, to make a meal of rawhide created a closer feeling. Indeed it put us on an equal footing, for man and dog ate off the same slab. It was not so bad for the first couple of meals but after a dozen or so the novelty wore off. On this 60-mile stretch I often thought of the overload of bacon we had on our previous trip down the Mackenzie.

It was my duty to drive the dogs. The other two went ahead to snowshoe a trail, although the trail was fairly good from the Indian camp in as the Indians had recently gone over it. When camp time came they would sometimes be far enough ahead to have the camp ready when the poor dogs, hardly able to drag one foot after the other, and myself, would show up. When the dogs got near enough to hear the boys chopping wood and making camp, they would prick up their ears and gather all energy for a final spurt and sometimes drop completely exhausted right at camp.

WOLVES ON THE TRAIL, AND NO GUN

A SLAB of skin a foot square is cut off and put near the fire to burn the hair off, then it is cut into small pieces or thin strips and boiled for an hour or so, the dogs are then fed with it. But ours would be fried again and sometimes fried to a crisp, the latter being the better way, not requiring so much energy to chew it.

At night everybody was so tired it did not matter much what they ate so long as it was filling. But when we would wake up in the morning with a pressing feeling in the pit of the stomach and have to wait an hour to get breakfast ready, we regretted not keeping check on our grub pile. Adding misfortune to misery, we had run out of tobacco for the past week, having been too generous to the Indians at the fish camp on our way out. Those 60 miles were made in three days, but are the last that I ever hope to make under those circumstances.

How ridiculous it seems to one who has been inured to the hardships, privations and mishaps on the Alaska trails, after returning to civilization, to hear people complaining of good food that is set before them.

On the last day of the trip the other two men were several miles ahead of me and were pulling full speed for a night camp. Between the two men and myself, right in their snowshoe tracks and traveling ahead of my dog team, were five wolves.

I was frightened, truly. Frenchy was carrying the gun, the guide has his own gun, and both of them were miles ahead of me. The dogs and I had only an ax as a weapon and I feared at every turn in the trail to come face to face with the wolf pack.

DANNY VALUSKUS

"Oh, pardon me—I thought this was a phone booth!"

One thing, it put pep into the dogs and they made a little better time, scenting along on the fresh tracks. The wolves had evidently been following the boys, not knowing that we were behind, as they had turned off the trail, going up wind, in scent of something else. But for miles after that I kept a sharp lookout behind with the ax close at hand.

It was on this day that one of my poor dogs played out. He was the leader and was a good chunk of dog. He was so worn out that he could not go more than a hundred feet at a time without falling. To put him on the sled for the other dogs to haul was out of the question. As I was only about five miles from home camp, I cached some stuff in a tree, put the dog on my shoulders and struck out ahead on the trail, the other two dogs with the empty sled following. We reached camp at eight o'clock in the evening, one dog on my back and the other two just barely crawling.

That was the result of our 31-day trip. It took a week for us to recover; the dogs required two weeks. I had taken oath several times in the latter end of the trip that just as soon as I could reach the post again, back up the McKenzie in the spring I would go. But after partaking of the comforts of the cabin for a week or so I got all out of the notion.

In 1899 a Victoria newspaper published the following account of prospecting parties that took part in the great gold stampede to the Klondike gold fields:

"Grim indeed are the tragedies marking, like milestones, the Edmonton route to the Klondike, on which nearly 3,000 started, full of high hopes a year or two ago, but which has not yet delivered one of those who trusted to it the northern gold fields. Instead of finding the gold that lured them to the northernmost west, they found disappointment and death. No one can say how many suffered the latter fate, but they are numbered by the scores.

"The return to civilization recently of a few of the survivors of seven different parties that undertook the overland trail from Edmonton, bear evidence of the grim tragedies that overtook them in that cold and trackless wilderness. They straggled out by twos and threes, as remnants of what was a strong and well provisioned party when they started for the land of promise. Some of the advance parties reached a point about 100 miles from the upper Laird River, while others got to McDames, Dease Creek, Mud Lake and points in that vicinity, which lies about 250 miles west of the Mackenzie River at Fort Simpson. Their objective point was the upper Liard trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, but winter and blizzards forced them into camp long before reaching there.

"One party of 12 men from Vancouver and Washington is known to have perished to a man in the Hay Mountains, having lost the trail in a blizzard. Two of the survivors relate what they had seen during the closing days of that year, the scene of which was Windy Arm, a branch of the Laird. While they were out on a moose hunt as a side trip to restock their grub pile, they found in a wooded canyon a weatherbeaten prospector's tent. Pulling back the flap they discovered its tenant to be a dead man, frozen stark, outstretched between the stove and a rough box that had been used as a seat. The body had lain there for months, preserved by the intense cold.

The 500-foot cliffs of the eastern portion of Great Slave Lake.

Photo Courtesy National Film Board, Ottawa, Canada

"At the side of the corpse was a little diary, the last entry in which had been made in January of 1898: 'My hands and feet are frozen and I don't think I can stand it much longer. I am helpless and my chum with whom I have had words talks of leaving me.' The diary gave the man's name and the place from which he came. There were ample supplies of provisions in the tent, also some money. The explanation seemed to be that, deserted by his chum and helpless, the poor man was unable to secure firewood and so froze to death.

"The story that he had deserted his partner had spread like wildfire, however, and his violation of the unwritten law of comradeship brought swift punishment. A miners' jury tried and convicted him. Next morning he was gone, disappeared in the night, leaving all his belongings. His whereabouts after that were unknown.

"Near Mud Lake a deserted cabin was found by a party of miners. A lifeless body lay on the floor; a glance at it and about the place was sufficient to read the explanation—starvation. A note penciled in German was picked up from the floor and forwarded to the nearest government agency. The signature was incomplete, the first part of the name reading 'Wally See—.' At still another point on the trail a skeleton was discovered in a sitting position at the foot of a giant fir tree, upon which a scrap of paper had been fastened bearing the significant words, 'Here the trail ends.'"

INCIDENTS OF A LONG, COLD WINTER

"AT ANOTHER tree not many miles farther on had been cut an inscription telling of the suicide of a desperate man: 'If hell's any worse than this trail I'm taking a chance.' The signature was incomplete.

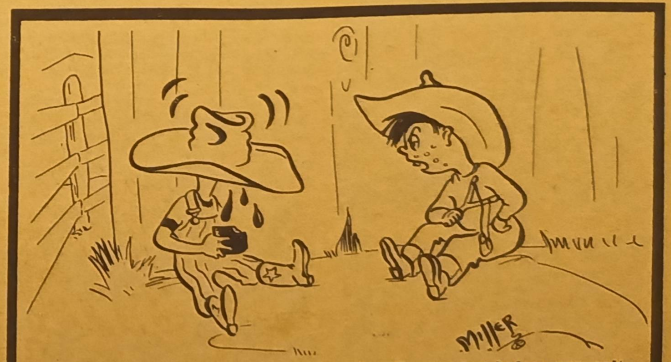
"A party of five men who went into the Upper Cassiar mining district from the town of Prince Albert over 15 months ago report that many lives have been lost on Great Slave Lake, the miners' rudely fashioned boats and rafts being unable to weather the squalls common to that icy inland lake. Five in one party were drowned in plain view of another party who were powerless to render aid. At Mud Lake there were, two months ago, 40 frost-bitten scurvy-sick prospectors with shortage of grub staring them in the face adding to the misery of their position. At Dease Lake provisions were running short; at McDames the prospect was anything but cheerful. From the latter point word comes of the finding of an identified body as that of an Eastern man. He had perished in his cabin either from cold or hunger."

In our snug and warm cabin at Fort Simpson little did we think what was taking place up near the head of the same Liard River that was emptying its waters into the Mackenzie within a quarter of a mile of our cabin. But it was a long way through that unfrequented mountainous country should one need help—and those poor fellows needed it.

Some of the parties that came down the Mackenzie that summer did go up to prospect the Upper Liard. We never heard whether they struck anything except hard luck or misfortune, and no one ever came through the "back door route" after that summer, the summer of 1898.

During our last exploring trip to the head of the Nehanni River we were only about 100 miles from the trading post at the head of the Laird.

Thermometer readings for ten days in February, 1898, showed the following range of degrees below zero: 42, 48, 51,



"How many times've I told you—take off your hat before you spit, Cockleburr!"

46, 50, 58, 23, 35, 42. During what they call a cold snap, the thermometer registers 60, 65 and 70 degrees below zero, though it hardly ever registers lower than 50° below zero down at the Arctic Ocean or near salt water level.

During a storm on February 3, a commotion was caused out in front of the big house. A string of ten dogs hitched to a big long carry-all sled, with two Indian trail runners and a white man riding comfortably wrapped up in heavy furs, came to a stop. The passenger was a messenger carrying dispatches to the Pacific Coast Whaling Company at San Francisco stating that seven of its whaling ships had been crushed to pieces and lost in the ice floes of the Arctic Ocean during the month of August. Their one remaining ship lay at Herschal Island, 60 miles off the coast of Alaska, and 300 miles out from the mouth of the Mackenzie River.

The entire equipment of the seven ships was lost, but the crews were all rescued. This man, a Mr. Jarvis, was the commodore of the fleet. He was very anxious to get word to his company so they could dispatch a ship by first open water in the spring with food to relieve a possible shortage, with such a large bunch of sailors and only one ship's stores to carry them through a year.

Mr. Jarvis remained here a few days to rest before undertaking that long mush of over 1,000 miles to Edmonton.

The first mail packet from the outside world arrived on February 8. Being the first and only word from home since our departure, it sent thrills of joy through the newcomers. Wishes were fulfilled in the form of from one to six lengthy letters in response to our numerous lead pencil notes written en route.

The packet had left Edmonton about November 1 but that was considered very recent news. The North Limited packet carrying government mail, consists of two half-breeds and a dog team, being relieved at each post by relays. The incoming teams lie over until the packet gets into Fort Simpson from the lower posts, so that the outgoing mail can be taken upriver by the homeward bound team.

On the arrival of the packet we got all the news of the upriver and so we heard all about the parties that had left Edmonton after us. The Duluth party that we had lost track of had made a winter camp about 100 miles up the river above us. Two other parties were camped with them, making a total of 21 men in that camp. After that we didn't feel quite so lonesome, having neighbors so near.

About a week after that three of our boys took a run for a visit, and right up until spring we frequently had visitors from there. A couple of men from a Chicago party, wintering at the upper end of Slave Lake, pulled into the post. This was in February; they came to "sort of look around," and they intended to wait until spring for the rest of their party. They had planned to stop at the Hudson's Bay house but learned that the price of board there was too high for such an extended time.

One of them, an old gray-headed California miner from Blue Grass Valley, was undecided just what to do, until we invited them to join our party and make it the "Big 9." This invitation he accepted and that is how old Sol got into the Klondike through the "back door." Pap, as the social head of the party, filled that position with dignity and distinction, the right man in the right place. His southern drawl and his wit and humor became the life of the party. We needed someone to throw a joke now and then to keep harmony among nine men housed together for six months. Pap originally was a frontiersman and his experiences had been many. He was always in good humor, a good player on the accordian and a good enough ventriloquist to mystify the natives during a seance.

"Heavens! I thought your western styles in slacks a bit daring!"

WOLVERINE DECLARED MEANEST ANIMAL

ONE EVENING we invited a bunch of natives and their squaws to a party at our cabin. After the music, dancing and refreshments were over, Old Pap entertained them with some ventriloquistic stunts. We had purposely placed some boxes for seats around the room. Before long Pap had every Indian looking under his box seat for someone that was hollering for help and "to let me out of here," or "help me out."

The natives were scared speechless and almost white. Very soon all were heading for the door and the outside, some of them on the run. This was something entirely new and which they could not understand. We tried to get them back into the cabin but they would rather remain out in the open where they could run. Toward spring, when the snow had sufficiently gone, he often joined us in a good game of baseball and other outdoor sports.

The natives, according to ancient custom, when members of their tribe die, lay them away on a scaffold or rack, built up about six feet off the ground. With the body is placed its belongings so that the spirit may have its outfit to use in the happy hunting ground.

Whether it be the moderately cool temperature or other peculiarity of the climate in that country, the bodies laid to rest on the racks, exposed to the elements, do not decay but are preserved in the manner of ancient Egyptian mummies.

Several well-to-do natives had recently died and all their goods and chattels were hanging on the racks. It seemed a pity to us to see a lot of useful things going to ruin, such as guns, ammunition, powder horns, sleds, dog harness, fishnets and dozens of handy things. As a truthful recorder I must add that several Indians whose souls landed on the other side of Jordan didn't get all their baggage, and our spring inventory showed an increase of goods on hand.

Sometimes when a native had no near relatives the district missionary would have to perform the ceremony complete. Cases have been known where a missionary would have to pay a brother or father to help bury his own kin. When a member of a family dies the cabin or camp is vacated for a month or six weeks, no one going near it. They will share their last mouthful with a living person but once you're dead they're done with you.

Their laws, like the laws of miners, are unwritten; they respect the rights of their countrymen. A cache of grub left along the trail where natives pass it every day is as safe as if it were guarded by a soldier. In fact the grub will last longer, for the natives will never take a thing unless driven to it by starvation, and then the food so taken is always replaced. But they would soon beg everything from you if you would permit them. They may stop to investigate and perhaps take things down, but the privilege is with due respect to the owner of the cache.

The wolverines cause great havoc with a cache of grub if it is not properly put out of reach. They can climb up the side of a building or log cabin with ease; to isolate any amount of provisions is quite a task. There are three ways by which a person may secure his grub from wolverines.

One way is to build a log pen securely pinned so that every log is firm. Another way—find three or four trees moderately close together, cut them off about ten feet above snow level, and build a platform to stick out over the edges of the posts about five feet, with the floor made of split trees with flat side down. Climbing up the posts, the animal can't get a foothold on the floor from the underside nor can he reach the edge of the platform from the posts. Trees must not be allowed to stand within 20 feet of the cache, as wolverines will climb to the top and jump across. The third way is to suspend the grub from a tripod of long slim poles by rope or chain.

The wolverine belongs to the weasel family, and looks like a little humpbacked bear. The Indians sometimes call it the skunk bear. It has short legs and a long weasel body. It has claws with which it can chisel through yards of frozen ground to get at a buried cache which the keenest sense of smell in the world has enabled it to locate. It has the biting power of a wolf and the tenacity of a bulldog. It is stronger, pound for pound, than any other animal in the world. A 120-pound timber wolf gives up the trail when it sees the wolverine padding toward it; it knows that the smaller animal will not budge from the path. It is better to tamper with dynamite than with the compressed ferocity of the wolverine. It combines the blood lust of the weasel with the patience of the grizzly bear. It is distinguished for intelligence; it seems as though the wits of the entire weasel family are concentrated in that one small brain. It has been known to work for days, carefully prying and tugging, trying one leverage after another, until it has found a way into a strongly built log cabin. If a wolverine once gets into your grub it is of no further use to white man or Indian; what it does not eat or carry away it will spoil.

A native, angered at finding his cache destroyed by wolverines, set a bear trap and caught one. He lashed the animal to a tree and set a slow fire under it. After burning off its thick coat of fur and singeing its skin he turned it loose. The neighborhood was not bothered with wolverines for a few years.

An Indian once said: "Indian shoot black bear, bear dies; Indian shoot wolverine, maybe so wolverine die; Indian shoot grizzly bear, Indian die."

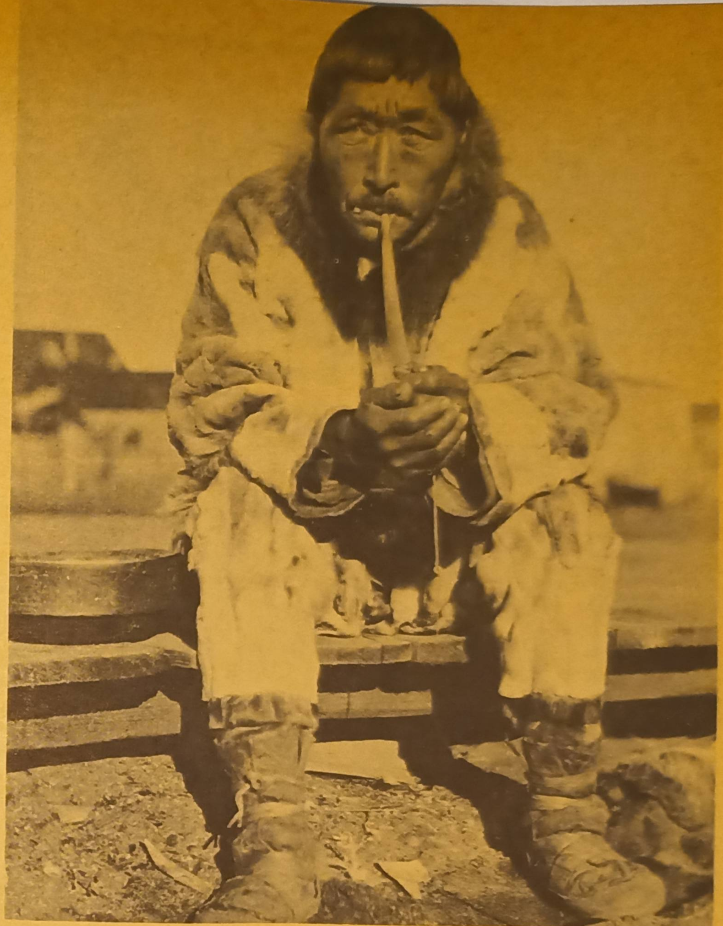
Our Poet had cached his buffalo coat in a tree about eight miles from the home camp on his way up from our Nehanni River trip. He returned for it a few days later and found only a piece of buffalo skin about four inches square, which the wolverines had overlooked. That was just one of the things these animals will do.

Notwithstanding the disappointment we met with in our attempt to locate a pass at the head of the Nehanni River, and the report we gave of our trip, which was anything but encouraging to anyone contemplating a similar move. we were all surprised one day in the latter part of March to learn that a party of three men, two of whom were recent arrivals from upriver, and the third our old friend and Poet, had decided to make the attempt to reach the head of the Nehanni River before the spring thaw set in, intending to pack over the divide and go down the Pelly River, as a short route into the Klondike by raft soon after the breakup of the river.

One was a newspaper correspondent, another was a saloon keeper, both of Chicago, with our Poet completing the trio. They proposed to explore the hitherto unknown country hundreds of miles in extent. They would not listen to the advice of older and more experienced residents of the country.

On the first day of April the three pulled out of the post with a three-dog team and a heavy load. It was a safe bet among those at the post that the trio would not get over the pass or anywhere near it.

In that country about the first of April we begin to feel the effects of the sun; by the 15th or 20th of the month it is impossible to travel during the day. The freezing nights afford a good trail until the morning sun melts the snow again. We were expecting them back any day until the time arrived when we knew it would be impossible to travel on account of water. Every creek, lake and slough was overflowing from the spring thaw of enormous snow throughout the mountains.



University of Washington Library

An Eskimo, called a "husky" in the North.

The snow had all gone, the little lakes and ponds in the country were full some three or four weeks before the big river broke up. During the wait in the spring, from about the 15th of April until the 8th of May, we had nothing to do but shoot ducks and geese, which were coming north by the thousands.

SPRING IN THE FAR NORTH

WE HAD eight guns (not counting those of the dead Indians) which were always kept loaded and ready. No matter what we were doing, when the sound of an approaching flock of geese was heard, everybody grabbed a gun and took a few shots, nearly always getting a goose or two at the cabin door. The Indian kids were expert at calling geese; could almost invariably turn a flock in their flight so that we could get a shot at them. It became too easy to kill the geese, so we took to hunting cranes on a sandy island, about four miles below the post. We would tramp down there and lie in the wet sand, hour after hour, waiting for a sandhill crane to show himself.

Along in the middle of the winter all members of the Big 7 agreed to let their whiskers grow to their full length, until it came time to launch the big scow in the spring for our departure downriver. It was a bewhiskered bunch when spring came. To make it more impressive each selected a different style. There was the Horace Greeley whisker, the Southern Colonel, the Cape Cod fisherman, the Dutch butcher, the French doctor, the old time minister and the French Canadian lumberjack. It was really necessary to wear some kind of a whisker in the summertime, mosquitoes being so plentiful.

At last the time came to prepare for our onward march. The Liard River broke up eight days before the Mackenzie. On the 8th of May the big river's ice began to rise here and there and crack loose from the shore. About noon the whole field, a mile wide, opposite the mouth of the Liard River, began to move and grind. Cakes of ice 100 feet square and ten feet thick were pushing out of the water, grinding and piling up, jar-

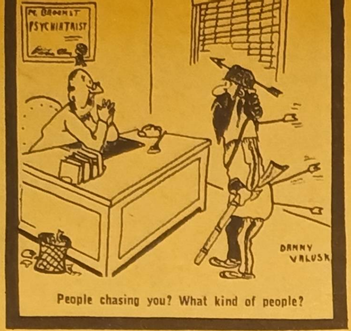
Naturally the farther north the thicker the ice and the later the break up. About every 50 miles there would be an ice jam, always in a narrow place where the water could not flow around. The mass of floating ice and swift water could not break through the solid ice; consequently it would jam and pile up. The river would rise 15 to 20 feet in half a day, backing the water up for many miles.

We waited a week after the break up before launching our boat to leave the post and continue our way north. About noon the old scow Big 7 was shoved off with a more experienced crew aboard her this time. We numbered eight men now, having added Old Sol or grandpap to the party. Our former companions were not with us this time. Our Poet had gone to the Nehanni Mountains; Joe English was intending, so he said, to come later with another party.

The river ran swift and smooth, with huge cakes of ice drifting lazily along with the old scow.

Having gone over this stretch of the river in the winter, we were familiar with objects along the shore marking the distance and the normal water line on the banks, so that we could pick up our numerous caches that were left during our winter's trip. After traveling six hours and covering nearly 50 miles, we noted that the river was unusually high and rising at a very rapid rate. This aroused our suspicion as to a probable jam near at hand, so we pulled into the mouth of a creek to await results. Unless in a sheltered place, a boat would be in danger of a complete smashup should one of those large floating chunks bump into it.

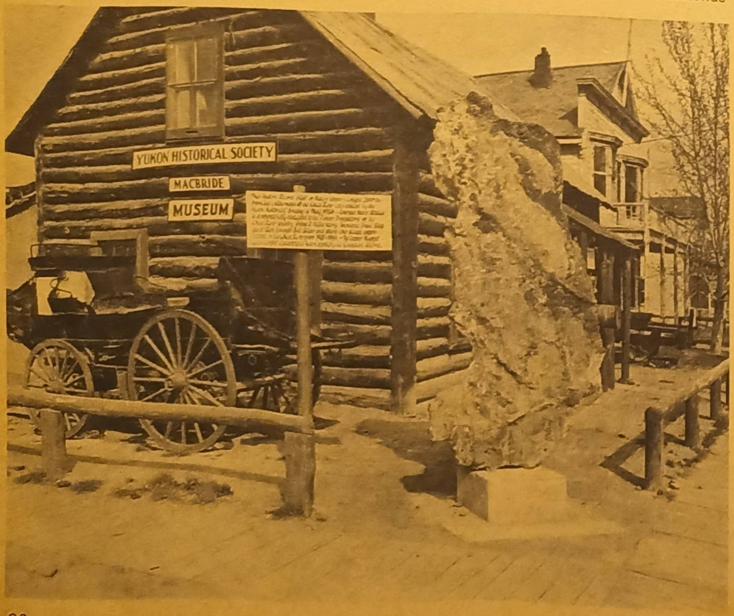
Waiting there in the creek an hour or so, we noticed the tide begin moving toward the river. Every few minutes we had to back up the boat to keep it from being stranded in the mud and grass, until we were out in the river again.



People chasing you? What kind of people?

The copper nugget in foreground weighs 3,000 pounds. It is pure native copper, believed to be the largest chunk in Canada. The Yukon Historical Society Museum contains relics and archives of Gold Rush, named after its founder, W. D. MacBride.

Photo Courtesy W. D. MacBride



The jam had let loose below and was taking the water away so fast that inside of two hours our old scow was 12 feet below the mouth of our creek high up on the bank where we had pulled in. Such jams cause the ice to be piled 15 and 20 feet high almost continuously the entire length of the lower Mackenzie River in the spring, as the jams are frequent enough to back the water clear back to the vicinity of the last jam.

The ice filled the river from shore to shore. Consequently at the break it would leave a high wall of ice cakes piled high on both sides for miles, making it extremely dangerous for boats going near shore. Monstrous chunks constantly toppling into the water kept up a roar that sounded like artillery. It was only by extreme care and caution that our boat could be landed at the very few bare spots along the shore. We traveled nearly ten miles before finding a place to tie up and be safe from a four-ton chunk of ice falling into the boat. Several times

Venturing on, we reached the scene of the jam. From the indications it must have been one of the greatest sights man ever saw. Huge chunks of ice were piled 30 feet in height; big trees were cut off at the roots; tons of dirt and gravel were shoved high up on the banks. Only rarely has an ice jam been witnessed by a white man. And an Indian's description of it is only a few grunts and much arm swinging.

It took us only ten hours of actual drifting from the post to the Frenchmen's cabin, a distance of 90 miles. About half way down we saw some Indian tepees on shore and we pulled in to see what they had. I can only compare what we saw there with the pictures I have seen of starving natives of India. The Indians were huddled together, so starved that their bodies were skin and bone. They were part of the tribe that had left the lake while we three were on our Nehanni Mountain trip—the people we hoped might help us out with food.

During the spring floods no one can travel; they had had nothing to eat for the past six weeks except what nourishment they could get from a certain root, grass tea, and willow bark.

Game is extremely hard to get at this time of the year, after the snow thaws, because of so much water in the country. We made the Indians happy by leaving flour, dried meat and tobacco, also a letter to the other parties coming down behind us, asking them to leave anything they could spare in the way of food.

When we arrived at the mouth of the Nehanni River and the Frenchmen's cabin, the first man to greet us was our Poet, looking as if he, too, had been starving for three months.

When he had finished relating his experience while on that foolhardy trip of his, we did not wonder at his appearance. From the second day after leaving the post, they began to get into rough and hilly country, which taxed their dogs to the utmost. They had gone a little over ten miles when a warm spell set in and the snow melted, putting their sleds and dogs out of business. They managed to make fair time at night when the snow was harder. By so doing they were about 150 miles from home before the regular spring thaw struck them. Even yet they were a long way from the summit.

Here they decided to abandon everything except a blanket each, their grub and a gun. Shouldering their packs and turning the dogs loose to follow and pick up their living on the way as best they could, they mushed on in the hopes of soon reaching the divide. They tramped through slush and water, over fallen timber, through brush and over rocky hillsides, crossing streams waist deep in ice cold water, with each scanty meal playing havoc with their grub supply and not a sign of game.

The poor dogs, slowly starving to death, would catch up to them a couple of hours after camp was made. Expecting every hour to meet game, they kept putting off the killing of a dog to help out on the grub. On the very day they had decided to kill one, the starving animals failed to reach camp; they had fallen on the trail one after another and died.

SPRING FLOODS ON THE MACKENZIE

THINGS were beginning to grow serious with their party now—150 miles from provisions on the one side and God only knows how far on the other. They realized that if they did not shoot some game within a day or two they would starve to death. Their clothes were in rags; they were almost barefooted. Afraid of starving to death while going over the perilous divide, they decided to return by raft as soon as the river opened if they were still alive. For two weeks their menu was half a squirrel a day.

Bunkhouse interior, Teller City, Alaska.

University of Washington Library

When the river opened, a small raft was made. With their outfit, a blanket and a gun, they went aboard the raft and let it go. A dozen times a day the raft would get stuck among the rocks in the rapids, sometimes going to pieces. Once, while rounding a sharp curve, a sweeper caught in the Poet's clothes and lifted him off the raft where he was held suspended in mid-air. The other two men landed the raft some distance below, came back and helped him ashore.

These mountain streams during high spring floods are boiling torrents rushing down through boulders and rapids. The river is full of large chunks of ice and driftwood. The peril of going 150 miles under these conditions can hardly be imagined.

They were three days in making the run down the river now and then stopping to patch up their raft—sometimes to make a new one after having to swim ashore from the wreck of their old one.

They eventually arrived at the mouth of the river and opposite the Frenchmen's cabin, which lay about a mile across the Mackenzie River. The big river was very dangerous at this stage and could not be crossed. The three starving men stayed on the opposite side for 36 hours before attracting the attention of the Frenchmen. The latter recognized them, having heard of their expedition from one of the Hudson's Bay Company's men who was on his way down to Fort Wrigley. The Frenchmen proceeded to get food over to them at once.

A man named Pero undertook the task. Having no small boat ready, he lashed two small logs together and tied on some grub. He sat astride the logs with his feet in the water and pulled out among the huge chunks of ice which almost filled the channel of the river. Not until he had wound in and out among the swiftly darting cakes of ice, did he manage to get through. He landed some three miles below on the opposite side. He was soon met by the three men who had anxiously watched his movements, knowing that they would soon have food. Their one and only existing thought was something to eat. All cried with joy when he met them with provisions. They camped together until the next night, when the river was sufficiently clear of ice to permit a big boat to be brought across by the other boys.

When all was ready to start across for the cabin, the newspaper reporter announced that if they would give him grub enough he would proceed up that side of the river to Fort Simpson, where he could wait until the steamer came along to go back to Edmonton in the spring. He refused to go any farther toward the Klondike. To be taken across to the cabin would mean that he would be left alone shortly, as everybody intended soon to proceed downstream. By remaining on the same side of the river as Fort Simpson, he would take no chance of being left alone opposite the post. So off he started. Not until months later did we hear of his arrival at the post. His clothes were worn out; he presented the appearance of a wreck. He boarded the first steamer upriver for the outside.

His trip of 90 miles along the side of a big river must have been a terrible one. He would have to go miles and miles out of his way to cross other rivers and creeks that emptied into the Mackenzie. In the spring all streams were running full to their banks. Camping alone in a wilderness at night on that trip under those conditions certainly required a rugged constitution and iron nerves. The other fellow waited a day or so and joined his original Chicago party when they came along downriver. At once we all agreed to take our Poet into the party again.

The Frenchman Pero, who rescued the three starving men, succumbed to the terrible rigors of the country about a year after that. The strain was too great and caused a twist in his brain. Over in the Yukon that fall he tried to commit suicide by jumping into the river, but was rescued by some miners, and apparently regained his normal faculties for awhile. The next fall he succeeded in his effort to die. While on an ocean boat going from St. Michaels to Nome in a storm he jumped overboard. The sea was too rough to make any attempt at a rescue and he was entered in the ship's log as drowned at sea.

After our surprise at meeting our Poet, our attention was called to a most pitiable sight in such an unhospitable and uninhabited land. Two men who had wintered at the Frenchmen's camp were on their way into the country to prospect the Mackenzie Mountains. About two months before spring one of the men was taken down with scurvy.

When we arrived the poor fellow was unable to move hand or foot. One leg was swollen to the size of a stovepipe and of similar color. The man wanted to be left behind to die, for he said that he would only be a hindrance to his partner in traveling in that rough country. The partner would not listen to any such argument and said: "If you are going to die, you can die just as easy while drifting downriver in a boat as you can in a cabin bunk."

To take this sick man out of his bunk, put him into an open boat to drift downriver through a field of floating ice, with chilly winds blowing, was thought by our party to be no better than suicide for him, but that was just what we did. All the boys pitched in to make the sick man as comfortable as was possible. He was carried aboard our big scow as their boat was not large enough to hold him and allow sufficient room to handle the boat. We all pulled out together and proceeded downriver.

After a couple of days it was noted that our patient seemed to have a little more life, which gave us hope of his recovery. Every three or four days we had to tie up and wait for the ice to clear out ahead of us. At each tie-up the sick man was packed ashore and propped up against a tree. The fresh air and the exercise he got began to show plainly in the interest that he began to take in himself. Two weeks after our start he could hobble around with a crutch; in four weeks' time he was wading waist deep in the ice-cold water while going up the famous Rat River, although his leg was still swollen and black. I met him three years later at Nome, strong and healthv again. He fairly forced the disease out of his system by strenuous outdoor exercise, the only cure for scurvy.

Our 28 days' journey of 900 miles from Fort Simpson to the Arctic Ocean was no mid-summer night's dream. Nearly the whole way we had to contend with ice jams, head winds, rapids and, worst of all, mosquitoes. After one experience near the ice jam, which came near ending our journey, we were not anxious about being the first party down the river.

For two hours, we had been drifting along against a faint headwind, where both banks of the river were piled up 20 and 30 feet high with huge chunks of ice. On rounding a bend we saw a narrow gorge ahead. Then the ice cakes were jumping and rolling over the top of one another. We knew it would mean death to attempt entering that canyon; our boat would be smashed into matchwood.

We were opposite a small island and some distance out from it. Our only salvation was to make the lower end of this island; this was the only place for miles where the ice was not piled up high on the shore. Two men in a boat ahead of us had seen the approaching danger and had landed. We were now pulling for our lives to make this landing.

By this time our boat had gone on past the island and was in a swift current among the drifting ice. It was owing to a faint tail wind that was then filling the sail and aiding us considerably that we ever reached the island. We pulled for nearly two hours as hard as man ever pulled. With nine men in the boat we could relieve one another at the oars.

WE GET NEARER THE ARCTIC OCEAN

ON REACHING the island we learned that the two men (who were Frenchmen) had had a similar experience a short time before. They had been caught between two ice cakes and their boat had been stove in. They had their boat upside down putting on a patch when we landed. We stayed on this island for three days. Not until we had seen several boatloads of men go on past us did we have the courage to try it again.

The canyon, or ramparts as it was called, was a gorge 400 to 600 feet wide, with perpendicular walls 600 to 800 feet high and 6 miles long. The river had to get off its belly and turn sideways to get through that canyon.

Looking down into the gorge we could see only a black end butted up against a cutstone wall nearly a thousand feet high. But when we got through to it we found a very sharp bend where the water piled up against the outer wall while going around the curve. The water raced through the gorge with such speed that it formed a cone-shaped ridge in the center of the river. It required experienced boat handlers to take a boat through without being jammed to pieces on the rocky walls. The boat had to be kept on top of that ridge of water.

There we found the curves and sharp bends. Below Fort Wrigley there is a stretch 50 miles long and a mile wide as straight as a bee line; we never knew just what sort of river to expect. Notwithstanding the excitement and danger attending our trip, we always found time to pick out the funny points and thus keep up our spirits.

In the spring after the snow melts and drives the bears out of their winter roost, while the rivers are yet solid with ice, they are up against it for food. They naturally will hang around the rivers in hope of getting fish. When the rivers do open and the banks pile high with ice, they will venture out on the high wall to look longingly down into the water below, and all the time huge chunks of ice are toppling into the water. This keeps up a tremendous roar so that we could shoot our rifles and not disturb the bears—except perhaps when we would hit one.

We must have seen 20 bears looking down this way for fish. We only got one; Frenchy shot him while we were in camp. We had to keep just so far away from the bank on account of the falling ice and could not tell whether the bear was hit or not; many times one would turn and scamper off into the woods. One of the men in a boat following us did shoot one and he fell into the water and was picked up.

After a long siege of heavy winds the going became so hard that we tried a new scheme. The idea was to make our boat fast to one of the big chunks of ice drifting along so quietly in the channel. During heavy headwinds the ice would find its way into a line in the deepest channel of the river, and as far as one could see there would be a narrow streak of ice chunks. We picked out one large cake to tie to and to let it haul us along.

The wind offered no resistance to the ice, it being ten to fifteen feet under water and only a foot above, but it kept us constantly guarding the boat with pike poles to keep the other ice from smashing into us. Our chunk was unusually thick. We found this out while going around the head of an island, where it struck bottom and nearly upset us. In striking it rolled nearly half over with our line fastened to it. After that we tried another scheme, which was to cut down a large tree, drag it into the channel, tie to it, and be towed along. But the old tree got us into all kinds of trouble among the ice chunks, so we had to abandon that idea too.

We then made up a drifting sail, which is a large piece of canvas spread out between two poles and held down in the water. We also hung out all the tin pails that could be spared. This last scheme worked fairly well.

The farther north one goes the more the wind blows from the north. We had quite a few days when there was no wind at all, and those are never to be forgotten on account of the mosquitoes.

Arriving at Fort Wrigley, we found it the usual type of Hudson's Bay Company small fur trading post. Stopping only an hour or so to stretch our legs on shore, we headed north again.

About 50 miles below Fort Wrigley the Salt River empties into the Mackenzie. It gets its name from the fact that there is an extensive deposit of crystalized salt at its source. The vein crops out in hundreds of spots. Being exposed to the air it has crystalized so that a light blow with anything will pulverize it into fine salt resembling our table variety. Everyone within a radius of 500 miles is amply supplied, as the Indians always bring down a great quantity in the spring on their return from their winter's hunt.

About 100 miles farther on down, which is 50 miles or so above Fort Norman, we viewed the burning coal mines. The oldest inhabitants in that country say that as far back as they have any trace, the coal beds have been burning. The holes in the ground, where we saw the smoke coming out, were situated on a flat marshy land perhaps three miles wide. Years ago the river rose high enough to partly flood the holes and for two or three years it was supposed the fires had been put out. Later smoke appeared again but has not increased in volume for years. The river had cut into one hole, which was near the top of the bank, and all that we could see was a dark cavity. The natives keep away from this region for fear of dropping through a crust of earth into a hole.

It is about 270 miles between Fort Norman and Fort Good Hope. Those two trading posts were occupied only by the Hudson's Bay Company; no free traders had as yet come down that far on the Mackenzie River. Between these two posts is the stretch of river that I mentioned as being so straight.

The farther north one goes the more he will notice the smaller growth of timber. Nearing the sea level of the Arctic Ocean, one misses the tall stately spruce that is so abundant in the upper river country.

Four miles below Fort Good Hope is the mouth of the Great Bear River, whose source is Great Bear Lake on the northwest boundary of the Barren Lands.

Some natives came into that post one day in 1895 with specimens of native copper as large as eggs. They said these were found in the vicinity of Sir John A. Franklin's old cabin, which stands on the river. The report was followed up and investigated by miners. They could not locate where the copper came from and the search was given up.

Before leaving Fort Good Hope, we laid in a stock of 400 pounds of dried moose and deer meat. This was the only kind of grub we could get here.

We passed Fort Wrigley, Fort Norman, and Fort Good Hope on our course down the Mackenzie, all of which were the usual type of Hudson's Bay posts. At Fort Good Hope we stayed for three days, waiting for the ice to clear out ahead of us.

One hour and a half after we had left Fort Good Hope, we crossed the line of the Arctic Circle, which is 12 miles north of that post and which constitutes the boundary of the land of the midnight sun.

By this time (June 1) the days were very long; in fact, it was daylight throughout the entire 24 hours. With no hard headwinds, we had made fair progress for 170 miles. Here we stopped in at the Red River Mission to deliver some messages.

This mission on the Mackenzie is just opposite Fort McPherson on the Peel River, 30 miles across a low marshy bog. The two rivers run parallel. Mushers can use the trail between the two only in winter when frozen and on a sled trail. The distance between the two places in winter is about 30 miles by the short-cut sled route, and in summer it is 130 miles around by water.

WHERE RIVERS MEET OCEAN

AFTER leaving Red River Mission, the Mackenzie River begins to spread out and gradually the current gets slower, owing to its approach to the Arctic Ocean.

For miles one will pass low sand islands which divide the flow of water and in some cases are completely covered with jam ice. This was the beginning of the delta which extends out into the ocean for 50 miles. The mouth of the Macken- is the same width.

The islands mentioned are the delta, caused by a deposit of silt from the whole upper river country during the past thousands of years. The river is continually gnawing away at these islands and it cuts new channels through every year. Thus the whole area is a mass of channels and small islands, the latter only a few feet higher than the river's surface.

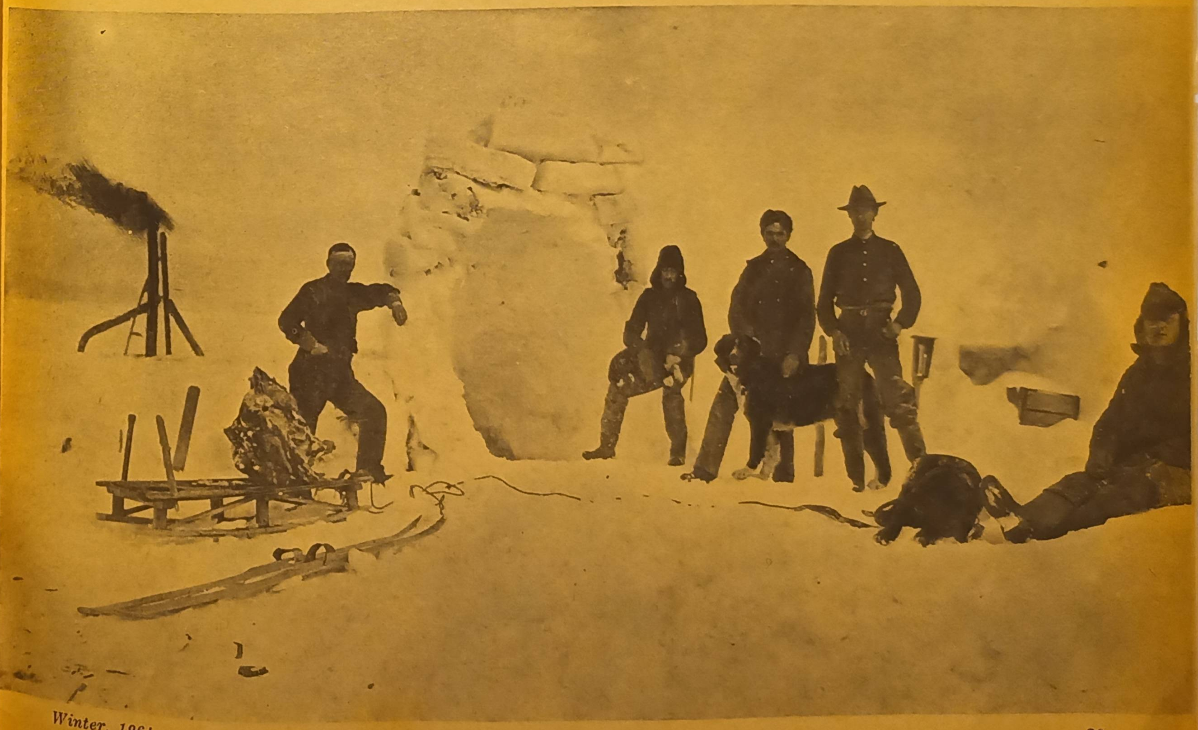
We passed a place shortly after a huge chunk of frozen silt had fallen into the river. It was 10 feet thick, 50 feet long, and 25 feet wide; its weight was too great to hold to the main bank. From the appearance of the recent flood on the opposite bank, it would have swamped a large sized boat had one been in the vicinity.

By carefully watching all outlets on the lefthand side we had no difficulty in reaching the mouth of the Peel River. Two of the boys took the canoe and went up to Fort McPherson, 40 miles up the Peel, to deliver mail and buy meat.

Maneuvering the old scow up the Peel about two miles, we took a small tributary which we thought would lead us to the summit of the Rocky Mountains. The instructions we received at Fort Good Hope read very simple before we got into that mess of channels at the mouth of the Peel and Rat Rivers. In fact they only gave us a bum steer on the whole business. The Peel has about six different channels at its mouth, some turning off at right angles and some which we thought were running back upstream.

Our instructions read: "Take first left channel about two miles—take right channel half mile—then up left channel eight miles—up right channel four miles to mouth of second creek with lob stick," which is a made landmark. In the instructions there was no mention of the little cutoff channels, dead sloughs and other bewildering places, so we got turned around and lost our bearings completely.

The two boys who went up to the Fort were to meet us at the lob stick. We were to wait for them there. When they arrived at the lob stick and waited a full day and we didn't show up, they started



Tunnel through snow to cabin. Before spring, cabins were frequently under 25 feet of snow and required up to 15 feet of extra stove pipe to reach the surface.

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out to hunt us. A Northwest Mountie couldn't have caught up to us as we floundered up and down every old slough and channel we could find, hoping to strike the right one.

We were lost. However, one of the boys thought of a plan. Leaving a note stuck in a stick at the entrance of each channel that we entered would guide the other two boys, and if we retraced our steps we could pick up the note.

We had pulled the old scow up a slough for about four miles—walking and at times wading through ice up to our waist—also cruised down a couple of wrong channels and had to retrace our steps back to the main river. But by our note signs the other two boys found us.

We were two days tracking our scow up lob stick and prepared to tackle the Rat, a river 100 miles long, the roughest, most dangerous, treacherous (and anything you might call it) for navigation.

We were two days tracking our scow up through brush, mud and water in what is called "still water" in mountain streams—meaning that the stream has no rapids or falls—only enough drop to make a good flowing current.

It is understood by tracking a boat that a rope line of 50 to 100 feet in length is attached to the shore side of the boat near the bow; one or two men remain in the boat to guide it around rocks, sweepers and roots while every available man is out ahead pulling hard on the line.

Where there has been no traffic through a thickly wooded country, the trail along a small riverbank is anything but good, and particularly so when pulling a heavy clumsy scow against the stream. There were big long overhanging trees, willow patches of unusual height, snarly roots, all so high that the fellow on the wheel (the last man on the line) could not clear his line. At this point a halt was made, all hands holding the boat in position while one man crawled down the steep bank and under all the brush, nearly always having to wade through the water anywhere from knee deep to over his head—to get the slack end of the line around the difficulty. Then all hands again joined him on the line and so on until the next stop was made.

When the boats are built small and tapering to a point at each end, they can be propelled against quite a stiff current by poles reaching to the bottom and shoving the boat along. Poling was out of the question with this heavy old scow.

We pulled in this fashion up to the first rapids. After an attempt to get up the rapids with the scow, it was found that we were up against it properly. Pull as we would, all hands knee deep in the icy water, (including our sick man) even then the old scow would not make the first rapids.

The rapids here were vastly different from those of the Mackenzie River. We had to go up these instead of down. At this night's camp we had a special session and decided on some different moves. One was to knock the old scow to pieces and build some small boats out of it. We would use the lumber in the scow, then whip-saw enough more boards out of trees to complete two poling boats.

Sparks and myself were detailed to take the canoe and go back to Fort McPherson, to engage some Indians to help us take the boats up the rapids to the summit. We had 60 miles to go before reaching the fort. We made this in one and a half days as we happened to catch a fair wind that took us 40 miles on our way up the Peel River. An old gum slicker raincoat stuck up on a stick for a sail took us right into the post. It was one o'clock in the morning and the sun was shining bright. (The sun shone 24 hours a day at this time.)

We found that some of the other parties had arrived there. By hiring Indians to pack enough grub to last them into the Yukon, they intended to take the 80-mile portage across the hills. The 80-mile trail is a foot trail only, and only such things as can be packed on a man's back are taken. The trail leads from the post through a very high pass in the Rockies, and ends at the La Paire House, formerly a Hudson's Bay post on the Bell River, thence by boat into the Porcupine River and on into the Yukon. These few who took the portage depended on getting in with some other party over at the La Paire House, who had brought their boats up the Rat River.

We met old man Snow Shoes here, whom I spoke about at Edmonton. During the winter in camp just above Fort Simpson, he and his party did not hitch very well, so the old man decided to pull out by himself. He had saved all the scraps of everything that would ordinarily be thrown away such as old clothes, old tin cups and plates, leaky pans and kettles until he had many more than he had use for. When spring came he got himself a birch bark canoe and loaded up his outfit. He had such a big load of truck that he upset his canoe the first time he got into it. Not stopping at that, he re-arranged his cargo and struck out on his own hook. Not wishing to travel alone he stayed with the boys until he met with other company. He arrived at the mouth of the Peel River with his tin pans and was helped along by the boys until he reached the mouth of the Rat River. Here he prepared one night to camp on a point.

Mail teams leaving Circle City for Fort Gibbon, Alaska. Circle City, 75 miles up the Yukon from Fort Yukon, was the outlet camp for Birch Creek diggings.

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TRACKING UP THE RAT RIVER

HE PICKED a spot where the river was cutting in against the bank and exactly under him. He had prepared a batch of bread dough and put it in a Dutch oven. Carefully covering it with hot coals, he crawled into his blankets, expecting to have a fine batch of bread for his breakfast.

He was awakened earlier than usual by one end of his tent falling on him. Getting up quickly, he found the edge of the riverbank only about a foot from the center of his tent, though it had been 15 feet away the night before. His oven and most of his tin pans were gone; his grub and bedding were safe. The water had been cutting into the bank under him, and the frozen sand had broken off in large chunks. Becoming discouraged, he returned to the post to take the mountain pass on foot.

The day after Sparks and I arrived at Fort McPherson, a tribe or village of Peel River Indians, known as Mountain Indians, arrived from their winter's hunt in the upper river country. Going up in their small birch bark canoes in the fall, they prepared a winter's camp at the head of the river where game was plentiful. Here they killed their moose, deer and caribou, dried all the surplus meat, cured the skins and made them into garments. They left enough hides untanned to make skin boats to bring their families and outfits down to the post in the spring.

In the afternoon three Indian boys arrived in a small skin boat. Their duty was to announce the approach of their chief and the tribe and to get two or three pounds of tea and tobacco, which they took back up the river to their band, who were waiting about a mile away. They would then all make tea and enter the post with every man, woman and child smoking pipes.

When the advance party arrives, it is a sign for everybody in the town to gather on the shore to welcome the chief. It looked like a small army coming down the river. There were 23 boats, some small but most of them scows about 30 feet long. All the boats were made from the pelts of moose sewed together with sinew and plastered up with deer grease.

Their dried meat was bundled up in large bales of from 81 to 100 pounds each. These were thrown into the bottoms of their boats with the rest of their outfit including the dogs. They also had several bundles of valuable fur pelts, such as marten, beaver, white, red and gray fox, black and grizzly bear and a few ermine.

There was great excitement. The Indians soon were trading their furs and meat for ammunition, calico, tea and tobacco. The squaws were busy getting the hides off the boats to trade also. Dog fights were taking place at all hours of day and night and the mosquitoes were eating us alive.

After the excitement of landing at the post had worn off, some of the younger Indians started in dancing to the accompaniment of the tom-tom drums. Their dancing differed from that of the up-river Indians. They did not choose a squaw for a partner and dance opposite her; it was everybody for himself. They simply stood still and worked their muscles and joints, keeping time to the tom-toms. They would go through those movements for an hour or more, with such intensiveness that they became completely exhausted and had to drop out, when others would take their places. The dance would last for ten to fifteen hours.

Herschel Island in the Arctic Ocean, is about 300 miles from the mouth of the Mackenzie River. Two days after our arrival, a missionary and half a dozen Eskimos from this island pulled into the post.

It was our first sight of an Eskimo, who is called a Husky in the north. They came up in two boats, one a whale boat such as is used by the Arctic whalers. Those whalers carry tackle, gun carriages, and harpoons and are made to stand the rough weather at sea. The other boat was an "oomiak," which is made of a single whaleskin and is generally used as a family boat.

The dress of the Huskies struck us as peculiar. We could scarcely distinguish the women from the men; they all dressed alike in the seal and caribou skins and mukluks. The latter was footwear, made of walrus and sealskin.

The missionary said they had to run their boats on the Arctic ice for 150 miles or wait until about July 5 to 10 before it usually broke up sufficiently to let a boat pass.

Through the assistance of the post officials we succeeded in persuading eight Indians to come with us, but before they entered any agreement their pay had to be forthcoming. We paid the post so much and they had to stay with us so many days, whether we reached the summit or not. We also bought two of their medium sized boats to take with us.

The next night we pulled out with eight Indians, two skin boats and a canoe, also 400 pounds of dried moose meat, 100 pounds of deer grease and two gallons of whale oil, the grease and oil to be used on the skin boats.

On our way back to camp we met half a dozen different parties coming down the Rat River, saying that they would not attempt to go up but would go around to the post and take the long portage.

The information was rather discouraging to us; however, we would go on up to camp and see what the rest of the party thought about it. Anyway we had the experienced Indians to put us wise to this kind of traveling.

While we were making the journey from the post to the camp, with the watchful eye of the Indians observing every sign or trace for something to eat, as is the practice of the northern natives, they succeeded in gathering some three or four dozen fresh duck eggs from nests recently made near the riverbank. Fresh eggs at this time and in this far off land were relished, you may be sure.

When we reached the camp the boys had two wooden boats nearly finished. With the two skin boats and one canoe, we had quite a flotilla and 17 men to handle it.

The Indians laid out the program, which was to take all our goods by boat to a point ten miles above. Here the river makes a large horseshoe bend, making a circuit of nearly 40 miles. This bend was of the worst and most dangerous nature. The distance through the narrowest point by portage was only about 12 miles. At this place we were to make a portage of most of our goods, leaving only a small boatload to take around by water. One of the wooden boats had been finished out of green lumber, unseasoned, and consequently could not be kept from leaking badly, so it was pulled out on shore, tied to a tree and given to the Indians to take home on their return. We proceeded with the rest of them, but owing to the extreme difficulty experienced in the first four miles, we found that we could navigate with only about one-third of a load in each boat. Some places all hands had to help on the same boat to keep it from overturning or breaking to pieces among the boulders in the swift water.

Some days we would hardly make more than a mile and a half upstream with one-third of a load, then have to make another trip over the same stretch the next day, and so on. Our one wooden boat was not used for the second trip; it was too difficult to get it up the first time. This is where the skin boats came into good use; they being flexible and able to rebound from a jar on a rock.

Although the chances of upsetting while going upstream were just as good as in the wooden boats, their advantages for going downstream were immense. Everybody would pile into the skin boats and sit in the bottom, an Indian in each end with a long pole, and away we would go downstream through boulders like a race horse, striking rocks every moment and sliding off of them just as easy. It would only take about ten minutes to go down the course which required all day to go up.

One day while going down in this manner one of the boats made a sudden plunge through a rapids and ran its nose into a cutbank, sending everybody sprawling. The boat turned around broadside and caught her keel in a snag sticking up from a root in the bottom. The strong current kept the boat fast against the snag. There we stuck for two hours in midstream, the Indians scared almost to death, for not one of them could swim.

MORE HARDSHIPS ON THE RAT RIVER

BY THE time we got our outfit up to the landing of the portage, several parties on foot had caught up to us and some were ahead with small outfits. Gradually the other parties kept discarding the unnecessary parts of their outfits. We had also left things piled up on the shore for the Indians to take home with them. Our party left several sacks of clothing, two stoves, three guns, four axes, shovels and picks, steel traps and numerous other articles. Later on when we passed around the horseshoe, there were tons and tons of stuff of every description including flour, beans, moose meat and other grub piled up on the bank, abandoned by parties that had attempted to take these things in with them.

There was no time to be lost or wasted. Every day counted in the short time left them till ice would form in the Porcupine River and before we would reach our destination, the Yukon. So it was reasoned that by abandoning their outfits and hurrying on they would reach the Yukon that fall but without grub. By taking their outfits in, winter would overtake them, delaying their arrival in the Yukon the following spring, also with no grub. So they chose the former plan, hence the abandoned grub along the banks.

I might add here that the spring rush of prospectors from Edmonton in '98, with their big outfits, had already caught up to us over the same trail that we had started on the year before.

Our outfit had dwindled down to consist mostly of clothing. Flour was too heavy to handle in great quantity, so we took just enough to see us through, although we had an abundance of dried meat. The occasion demanded that we have plenty of that along, as so much got wet and had to be thrown away. As fast as a slab would spoil it would be removed so that a good slab would be exposed to the elements.

When the spring rush of men caught up to us we received the outside news and reports of the parties that had wintered up the river above us. They reported that nearly every camp had lost men by scurvy during the winter; in some of the camps nearly half the total of men had died from that "northern plague."

Many of the outfits that arrived at the Rat River had only a small portion of what they had started out with, having lost their goods in the rapids. Many men had turned back for home after they had been wrecked and lost their outfits—ragged, hungry, footsore and penniless—helped out of the country by the Hudson's Bay Company and the Mounted Police. Such was the result of the "all water route" gold rush to the Klondike in the spring of '98.

One of the first things that met our gaze at the portage was the 1,000-foot high bluff, up which we had to climb, with a 60 to 100 pound pack on our backs. We packed 2,000 pounds over six miles across the muskeg, which was half way, and made a cache at a little stream. This muskeg was on a tableland nearly covered with sloughs, bogs and willow patches.

Upland muskeg is a moss that stands about a foot high in bunches called niggerheads. They are so close together that one cannot walk between them; when they are dry they roll from side to side, making the walking very hard; when wet they sink to the ground if stepped on and will come back into place again like a sponge.

We started around a horseshoe bend with our boats loaded light enough so that we only had the one trip to make. Day after day, for two weeks, we spent hauling, walking and lifting our boats up through gorges, canyons, brush, roots and boulders, having some mishap every so often to break the monotony—eating a meal of bannock and moosemeat in the rain as our tent was out on the portage covering our goods—and all the time fighting mosquitoes.

Three different boats were upset, losing some goods each time, and nearly all of the contents on one boat were lost by getting into a bad place. There was one valise in the party and into it were packed our valuables. Being heavy, it sank and was never recovered. It contained four watches, four six-shooters, 400 cartridges, 18 pounds of tobacco, half a dozen good pipes, maps, papers, letters, photographs and, sad to relate, my false teeth, the upper plate of which was broken the winter before by biting frozen bacon. They, too, had been stored in the grip for safekeeping. Rubber boots were lost, along with all our slickers. But nearly everything that floated we managed to recover by heading it off downstream.

Our matches caused us some delay. They, too, got wet, and being the wax taper kind, we allowed them to dry in the little tin boxes. But when we tried to use them we found that a catch could not be separated from its bunch without igniting the whole block, so they all had to be dampened again and dried separately.

One time while trying to get a boat up through a narrow gorge against a swift current, the line broke and let it go back downstream with only one man in it to look after things. He had an exciting ride for a quarter of a mile or more while the other boys stood on the shore and enjoyed the joke.

The fact that poor old Sol (Grandpap) could not swim made him all the more cautious about getting into the water. Once in a while when crossing streams to get past obstructions we would all have our troubles. It was necessary to get in, perhaps waist deep in running water, the slippery stones on the bottom providing a not very secure foothold, at the same time trying to keep the boat in position with the line. Grandpap nearly always got a good ducking before he got across. His limited experience as a boatman would not warrant his taking charge of a boat but he did not want to be a deadhead.

Each night that camp was made the skin boats had to be unloaded, hauled out on shore and turned upside down overnight, or rather while we were in camp, to allow the skins to dry somewhat so as not to become soggy and water-soaked, which would cause them to set. Seal oil was rubbed over them to prevent drying too fast in the sun, and in the morning all the seams are plastered full of deer tallow before she was put back into water. At each camp we had to repeat this operation.

We finally reached the point opposite our cache of goods on the upper side of the horseshoe, and proceeded to pack them over the last lap of the 12-mile portage. The height that was gained while coming up around the horseshoe elevated us 2,000 feet or more. In this last six miles of portage we had to pack our loads up hill all the way and some of those hills seemed like straight-up stone walls.

On the very day that our goods were packed over to the river the contract with our Indians expired. When engaging the Indians we had reckoned on being up to the summit by this time. They could not be induced to stay a day longer because the first steamboat was expected in at Fort McPherson in a few days and they must be there for the grand celebration. We bade them all goodbye, they struck out across the portage, and were soon out of sight.

Here we were still about 40 miles from the summit, and judging from our point of view, the rapids up ahead were just as fierce as those below us. We realized our predicament, with additional freight to be handled and a shortage of eight strong men as stevedores and navigators.

For eight days we pulled and hauled, lifted and waded, until we reached the chain of small lakes at the summit. One of the eight days was the Fourth of July, and my diary reads for that date:

"July 4th—Eight hours up—one hour down, tracked up nearly eight miles—very bum 4th of July—snowed in evening—ground covered about a half inch deep."

In some places we had to lighten the loads and make two or three trips up and back. While going up a crooked and slow running stretch of river near the lakes, where both banks had a heavy growth of willows and birch, the Duke and I were trying to force one of the clumsy skin boats through, when a broken treetop caught in the Duke's sweater and hauled him overboard. He succeeded in getting ashore, none the worse for his cold bath.

The snowbanks and glaciers in the mountains are almost wholly the source of those turbulent streams in the far north.

WE REACH THE PORCUPINE RIVER

AT NEARLY every turn in the river there were huge snowbanks and glaciers dripping into the river during the summer.

On entering the small chain of lakes, the traveler's attention is called to the blazed trees which contain the names of every white man passing that way. Our names were added on a fresh blaze under the Big 9 (with a few lines by our Poet, which was subsequently copied and published in the Dawson *News* that fall):

> The man that comes this way will find
> That he has surely lost his mind.
> He'll curse the day he left his home
> Within those rocky wilds to roam;
> He'll tear his clothes, wear out his boots,
> Then curse and damn all 'back-door' routes.
>
> Before he gets his goods across
> He'll suffer many another loss.
> He'll smash his boat and lose his grub,
> Then have to float down in a tub;
> And, last of all, he'll meet the ice,
> And then have nothing left but lice.

The fall of water in the Rat River, in its 100-mile length, is 7,000 feet. The mouth of the Rat is at sea level, and its source is as high as the headwaters of the Athabaska, 3,000 miles way.

What a great relief it was to think that we had at last reached the summit of the Rocky Mountains and henceforth our course would follow the downward flow of all the rivers until reaching the Yukon. The small chain of lakes were divided by a marsh a mile long; we had to make a portage over this with our goods and boats. On this portage we put in a week in a most trying way.

This marsh was the breeding place for mosquitoes that supplied this district. From the few parties that had passed on ahead of us, the mosquitoes had cultivated their taste for white man's blood. They would swarm over one in a huge cloud or heavy mist. We all wore nets fastened to the rim of our hats. Every bare spot of our anatomy was perfectly secure from their attacks and with mooseskin gloves we got only an occasional bite while we were constantly on the move packing. But stop to rest for a moment and a swarm would light on a fellow and try to get under the net. If we would hold our hands quiet they would hunt around on the gloved hand and run their augers down through the thread hole where it was sewed together.

It was when we attempted to eat a meal that they were the most vicious. They could stand nearly as much as we could. Our only way was to slip the gloved hand gently under the face net with a chunk of bannock or dried meat, which we were living on.

In that country no man dares travel without his mosquito bar bed. This consists of a good piece of canvas a trifle larger than his bed, with a wall of netting about three feet high sewed all around, then another strip of canvas a foot wide sewed on the bottom of the net, which can be tucked under the edge of the bed on all sides. Four sticks are put up, one at each corner. The whole net is held in place about three feet over the bed by these sides. During sleeping hours, if one's hand were thrown against the net, it would at once be covered three deep with hungry pests.

After we had everything packed over the portage it looked easy to us. It was, compared with the past seven weeks. We first entered a small, narrow creek about four feet wide and three feet deep, with overhanging willows along its banks. The extreme depth for such a narrow creek was due to the slow current and the overhanging willows and moss that did not decompose or wash away. At many of the short turns we were obliged to shovel off the corners of the bank to get the boats around them.

Where it required main strength to get a boat through, owing to the thick growth of brush on the bank, we were obliged to wade along the bottom. It was by this means that we discovered the enormous amount of bluefish in this small creek. They had come up the river as far as they could and were here by the millions. It was a very "ticklish" job, wading in three feet of water, with cold fish slapping up against us. They could be caught by dipping a pail in or scooping them up with our hands. Before leaving there we pickled fish in every bucket and can that we had and filled a grain sack full of fresh ones.

Later we worked out into a larger stream that had only occasional shallow rapids in it. Here we stopped at an Indian's camp and bought some mountain sheep meat, which was very much relished by all.

Fifty miles or more brought us down into the Ball River and to the La Paire House, which had been a Hudson's Bay Company's post but was long since abandoned. This place was the landing for the foot trail across the mountains from Fort McPherson.

We camped here for a couple of days to do our washing. During that time several parties caught up to us from both the Rat River and the foot trail.

It was here on the 19th of July, 1898, that we first heard of the United States being at war with Spain, which took place during the month of February, when the battleship *Maine* was sunk. And not until we had almost reached the Yukon, in August, did we hear of their first battle. The war was over and the soldiers brought back home before we knew anything about a war being on and won.

About 50 miles more of uneventful sailing and drifting, and we reached the Porcupine River. At this point, some of the other parties decided on going up to explore and prospect the upper Porcupine in the direction of the Klondike country, which was thought not to be very far distant. Our exploring experience already had sufficiently satisfied us, so we proceeded on downstream for the Yukon.

Two outfits of seven men did go on up the Porcupine, saying they would prospect on their way while heading over to the Klondike. It was an unknown country. The only explorers through there had been Indians.

WE DESCEND THE YUKON RIVER

THE FOLLOWING spring three of that party of seven men came trickling down on a small river into the Yukon about 30 miles below Dawson and the Klondike. They were walking skeletons, having eaten all their grub long since. They were the survivors of a scurvy camp during the winter, hundreds of miles away from other camps. They had killed two moose during the winter and this kept them from starving to death.

On reaching the Yukon they didn't know whether they were above or below Dawson, so they pulled a few drift logs together to make a raft and shoved off to drift downstream to the first settlement. They landed at an Indian camp about 30 miles below, where they received food. The first steamer coming up river took them up to Dawson.

In seven days of sailing and rowing through some 25 very interesting rapids and wonderful scenery, through canyons and gorges, with perpendicular walls thousands of feet high, we came onto the site of the ancient Rampart House, an old trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, now abandoned.

Previous to the reconstruction of the International Boundary between Canada and Alaska, the Rampart House was situated on the Alaska site some eight miles below. Surmising that they were in American territory, where their charter did not hold good, they moved to the present site of the Rampart House and established a fine post. Some time later, when the permanent line was established, they found they were yet ten miles inside the American line. The company then abandoned the post entirely.

That was one traffic lane over an international boundary line, at which there were no customs official. He would have died from loneliness, after this gold rush bunch had gone through. The Indians, having their trading post transferred to other parts, naturally followed downriver to the Yukon, leaving the solitary missionary to himself. It was only a short time after the post closed up that he too put some few personal belongings and some grub into a canoe and left the country to go back to England, leaving all his books, his household goods, even his organ.

Native skin boat—usually used for family.

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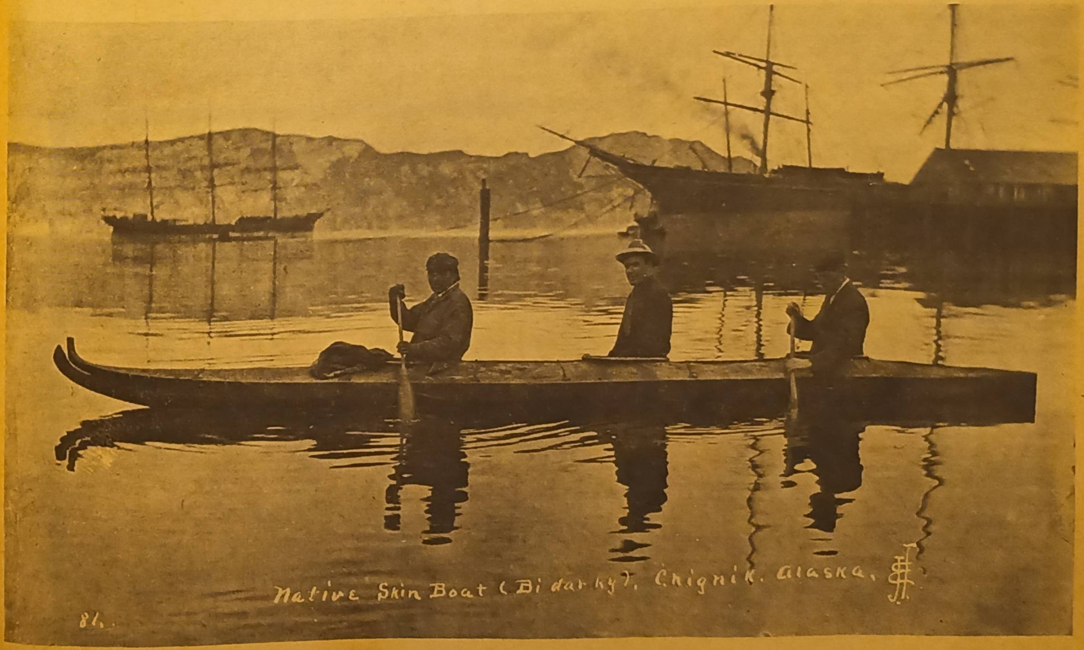

Native Skin Boat (Bidarky), Chignik. Alaska.
81.

The Indians had carried away many of the things, and each prospector added a few trinkets to his stock of relics as he was passing by. As my share of the trinkets I found a small Bible, which I still have.

While waiting here, some of the boys took a trip back a few miles into the hills and found the usual fine colors of gold that can be found all over Alaska.

The country and the face of the steep cliffs for miles and miles, bear evidence of mineral stains resulting from volcanic actions and extreme heat. The wide open valleys through here were very heavily timbered, mostly fir and spruce.

The international boundary line is distinctly marked. One may see a cleared strip about 50 feet wide cut through the timber over hills, hollows and mountain tops, with a stone pile monument on each prominent hill. It looked like a railroad right-of-way.

Some little distance below here, while rounding a big bend in the river, we noticed a long line of what we thought were mountain sheep running up over a sand bar and into the bushes. We put a little more power on our oars so as to overtake them. Reaching the place, we saw geese tracks in the sand. All hands piled out and armed themselves with sticks and headed into the tall grass. When all had returned to the boats we counted nine full grown goslings—their wings not sufficiently developed to fly. They had taken to the bushes and grass to hide.

All this time at each and every camp made, the two old skin boats had to be turned over to dry, and required our attention very frequently during the day, which necessitated hauling them out on shore, and putting on a patch or two of moosehide before we could proceed. When packing the boats a space was always left along one side of the goods so as to bail out the water, which was constantly leaking in through bad spots that were commencing to rot.

When we had made nearly 250 miles down the Porcupine (a little over half way) the bottoms of the skin boats became so bad that it was necessary to make camp and build wooden boats to take their place. A good spot was located and a camp made where big timber could be had.

The Duke and myself had been managing one of these skin boats for the past few weeks and had become acquainted with its peculiar whims; it required a good deal of coaxing.

It is unbelievable but true that seven men did live together in one organization for about eleven months without having a fight. But the hardships of the trail in the past two months or more had been gradually eating into our dispositions and our patience with one another. Hot tempers and sharps words developed on the least provocation.

At this boat building camp, the Duke and I decided to pull out on our own hook. Papers were drawn up, signed and sealed, relieving us of any obligation to the Big 7 organization thereafter.

We took the two old skin boats—which were going to be discarded entirely—and removed the rotten bottoms, making one fairly good boat out of the two, with some extra good skin to be used for patches later.

It required two days' work to complete this patching business. We finally got started, packing our grub (not very much at that) and our hardware—an axe and gun—as ballast. We bade goodbye to the boys. From that day to this some of us have never met although I have frequently heard of their whereabouts.

The Duke and I hit only the high spots for a few days going down that river with its numerous rapids. Once in awhile headwinds were encountered, slowing up our pace. The last hundred miles traveled, our boat was so bad we had to pull into shore three or four times a day to put on a fresh patch. The smallest snag or stone rubbing on the bottom would tear out a piece of skin.

The grub supply was getting low as to variety; we had only flour, dried moose meat, fish, salt and tea—no sugar, baking powder, sourdough or fruit. The moose tallow, used for filling up the seams in the patches on the boat, we also used for cooking our grease bannock. The absence of sweets is missed more than any other one thing in a musher's outfit. The human system seems to demand the sweet first when one has been denied it for some time.

A day or two before we struck the Yukon we met a party of prospectors coming up the river and we all made our noon lunch together. They had sugar, butter, canned cream, fruit and all the delicacies that the Duke and I so ravenously craved. We partook of the sweet food until we were ashamed. It was from these men that we heard of the battles fought in the Spanish-American War that had taken place three months previous.

In two days we reached the Yukon, and paddled our way up the river a mile to old Fort Yukon. The waters of the Yukon are very dirty. The water is filled with a yellow sand that flows into it out of the White River above Dawson.

It was lucky for us that we did not have much farther to go in that old skin boat. While paddling upstream and in near the shore, always on the lookout for snags and stones, we spotted a good place to make a landing and got within 20 feet of it, when a ragged snag, just under the water, caught in a patch in the boat's bottom and ripped a hole nearly two feet long. Yes, "all the passengers and crew were saved." The cargo of one gun, one axe, frying pan, kettles and bed rolls was also saved.

The Duke and I landed in the Yukon country, knee deep in water, with everything we owned soaking wet. Our few duds were saved but what little grub we had "went down with the ship." We tied the old tub to a stake on the bank and let her stay sunk. Next morning there was nothing left of our gallant old ship but her ribs. The starving dogs and probably the Indian kids had taken or eaten every particle of skin and the wet moose meat.

This was on August 8, 1898. On August 11, 1897, we had left Montreal—almost a year in reaching the Yukon; the Klondike region was yet over 300 miles up the Yukon River.

GRIM TALES OF HARDSHIP

I HAD ONE Canadian dollar bill left, the last cent I had. With that I bought four pounds of sugar. The Duke bought some rolled oats and canned cream. Then we held a feast, eating up the whole batch at one sitting. We met several acquaintances within the next day or two and figured in for a few meals on the side. My diary reads—"First square meal in eight months."

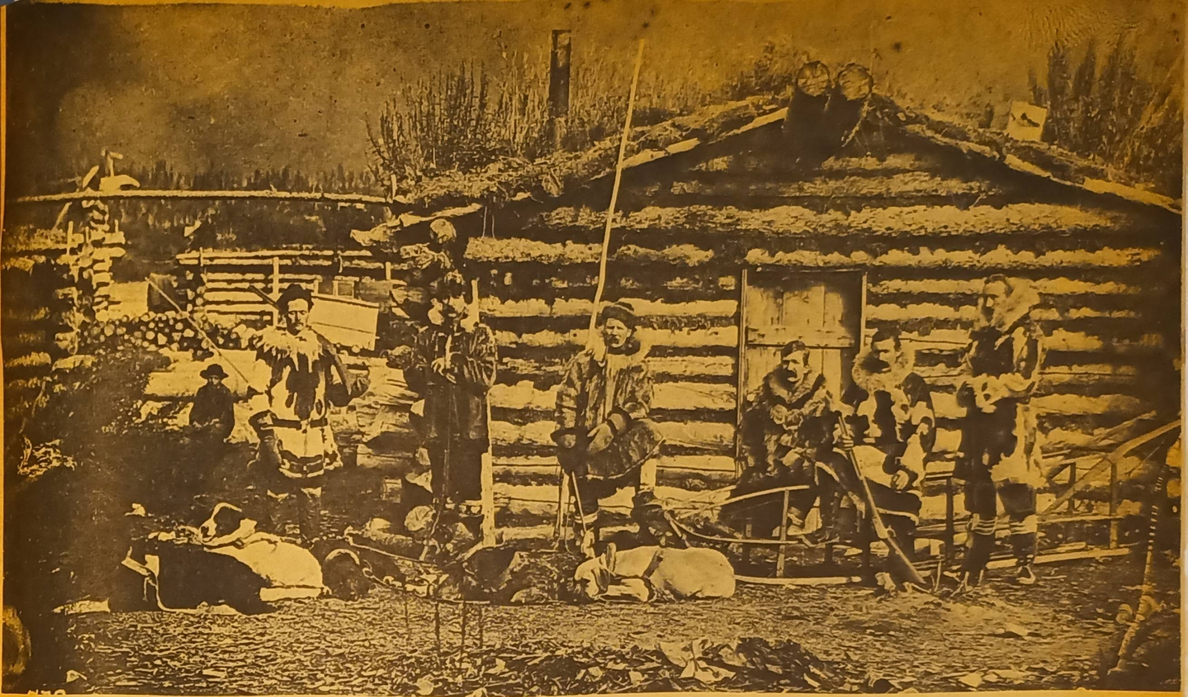
We were in civilization again, where one could see steamboats and freight passing up and down the Yukon every day, and where one could read newspapers not more than six weeks old, besides hearing the stories of lucky and unlucky miners during their two previous winters up in the Klondike.

A great number of the Mackenzie River boys had already pulled into Fort Yukon, and had not decided on any particular move as yet, just resting up a little after their long and hard trip. We joined the throng and did nothing for a week but sit on the bank and watch the steamboats.

The Duke and I left part of our outfit up the river. When we separated from the Big 7, it left us without a tent, so all that covered us at night was our mosquito bar. You can imagine how the steamboat passengers would rubberneck at us under our four by eight foot mosquito bar bed top. It required a lot of skill to hide a slab of bacon in that bed so that the hungry dogs would not get away with it.

AQUA
J. RAOUL TURNER

"Wet Eagle! Why you no tell mama?"



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Miners at Forty Mile Post. This site was named before the present international boundary line was established. It was located just 40 miles on the Canadian side of the old, or first, boundary line

Fort Yukon as a city did not amount to much, in fact not in any capacity. When the miners are gone, it only consists of one store, a mission and half a dozen log shacks, the latter belonging to the Indians. But with the coming of the miners every native and his family within 100 miles moved into the Fort for the excitement. So on our arrival the population ran about 200 Indians and 100 whites.

Every day for nearly three weeks as many as a dozen small boats, having from one to six men each, with their outfits, would pass on their way downstream from the Klondike, drifting down to St. Michaels and possibly out home thoroughly disgusted and discouraged with the prospects at the Klondike. Anything they could sell or could spare was easily disposed of at the Fort among prospectors who had arrived from the Mackenzie with nothing in the way of an outfit. The discouraged bunch from Dawson, with their tales of woe, did not put much of a check in the forward movement of the Fort boys; it was generally assumed that those boys going home were not cut out for prospectors; their yarns of hardships were laughed at.

Often one would see a small boat drifting along in the channel, apparently empty; but if a steamboat gave a sharp whistle there would be some quick moves toward the oars by sleepy looking individuals. One day a boat was drifting silently past the Fort, and we could see that it contained an outfit. Thinking the man wanted to pull in, but had gone to sleep, we shouted at him. He arose from under his blankets, took one sweeping glance at everything on shore and lay back again, as much as to say. "Don't talk to me, I've got enough of this durn country."

Quite a number of men stopped at Fort Yukon to make preparations to go up the Porcupine River to winter and prospect its tributaries. When the following spring came there were stories of terrible hardships endured. Some of them went back 200 miles into the mountains and built their winter quarters. Back in the wilds, game was abundant. This cost the lives of several who were caught in severe snowstorms while hunting. They would lose their way, be overcome with fatigue and freeze to death.

During that winter, when prospectors were roaming around near the Arctic divides, several skeletons of men were found on treeless summits where the snow had blown off. They were generally thought to be deserting whalers from the Herschel Island whaling station. Cruelty to sailors during their long winter tie-up was said to be equal to that of the old slave ships. It is supposed their endeavor to reach the Yukon on the scanty supply of provisions they had smuggled out of their ships made it necessary to force their march and penetrating winds and low temperatures sapped their vitality and caused their death on these ridges.

An old gray-haired man was found there, his outfit recently scattered by the wolves. He was seated on his sled which he had been pulling by hand.

Two years later the government put in a branch of the geographical department in this region. Their thermometers registered 83 degrees below zero two or three times during the winter and for days at a time 50 and 65 degrees below. On these divides, where the rivers, creeks and canyons merge into one common level, a draft is created through them from the north and off the Arctic Ocean; this accounts for the perpetual gale here.

Some prospectors called the McDonald party rigged up a small sternwheel scow at Fort Yukon that fall and started back up the Porcupine River. They went up 150 miles on the Black River, which is a tributary and runs parallel to the Porcupine and Yukon. The country was not abundant in game and, not meeting with any success in prospecting, toward spring they decided to rest up until the ice moved out. The result was that they contracted scurvy. There were four in the party, and three were taken down at once, leaving the one to look after the three. Two died and were buried outside the cabin door. Nearly 200 miles to the nearest known neighbor—two of his companions dead and the third not able to move—in this situation McDonald himself was stricken. His own story is:

"When the boys died I was hardly able to drag them out of their bunks to the door to bury them. I was not able to chop wood so had to break up the bunks that were just vacated in order to melt snow to relieve the awful thirst that scurvy brings on. We lived for several days in this condition. Then warm weather set in and water commenced to run on the ice. I resolved to get up and go to the river for fresh water. I was gone so long, crawling on my hands and knees, that the other fellow thought I had lain down and died, so he attempted to get out and see. Rolling out of the bunk, he managed to get to the door just as I returned with a little pail of water. Opening the door, I fell exhausted near my companion. He spoke to me for the first time in several days and said, 'My God, Mac, I guess it's all up,' and died right there."

McDonald crawled into a bunk and lay there for a day. Then he made another effort to move about. He pulled his last comrade outside the door, scraped the chips over the body. He believes the little exercise involved in going to the river for water and hauling his comrades outside to bury them and efforts to overcome the sickness brought him through.

He lay in his bunk for three days. When he heard a roaring sound outside he knew the river was breaking up. The next day he crawled out to his boat on the bank, got his block and tackle onto it and pulled it into the river. He pulled into the boat without oars or provisions, only his blanket, and turned it loose in the swift current to find its own way down to the Yukon.

About five miles above the mouth of the Porcupine, an Indian saw what appeared to be an empty scow drifting downstream and pulled out to it in his canoe to investigate. In it he found a man, lying on the bottom, speechless and helpless. He was taken to Fort Yukon, then sent up to the hospital at Circle City, where he told of his experience. A party was sent up to his cabin and found the other three as he had stated.

ADVENTURES ON THE CHANDALAR RIVER

WHEN we were at Fort Yukon, several parties arrived there over the trail we had traveled. Among them was old father Snow Shoes in a birch bark canoe which he had got from some Indians on the summit. He struck a job soon as a deckhand on a steamboat. He had collected a large amount of junk while on his way from the summit and was proceeding to pack his junk pile on the steamboat, but the officers compelled him to abandon it a second time, which nearly broke his heart.

The steamer took on board 20 cords of wood, and to initiate old Snow Shoes in duties of a deckhand, he had to help pack cordwood aboard on his shoulders. The old man was constantly in trouble trying to keep his whiskers from tangling with the wood when throwing it from his shoulder. He managed to work his way up to Dawson. Then he opened a store, which paid him well.

We heard yarns about the ups and downs of other prospecting parties—those that had become dissatisfied and had quarreled. Two men had traveled nearly 3,000 miles together in boats and on trails. They were about half way down the Porcupine River when they disagreed and separated. They had one small scow and a single outfit, but in the hasty division of their belongings they sawed the boat into two halves, leaving both halves with open ends. They cut everything in half that they could to satisfy the spite that each fellow had for the other. To make the boats of any use they had to take lumber from the top edge of the half boat to board up the end. Yet they arrived with their outfits at the Fort in those two boats which were not much larger than packing boxes.

Fort Yukon was the distributing point; everybody was lost track of after leaving here; some went upstream and some downstream. The Duke engaged as a deckhand on a boat going up to Dawson; I bade him goodbye until the following summer. I had decided on putting in a winter prospecting in a new and unexplored region some 200 miles north of there; but first of all I had to make a grubstake, and opportunity soon presented itself.

The North American Trading and Transportation Company wanted two warehouses built and, lumber not being available, logs were to be used. One of the recent arrivals from the Porcupine had casts his lot with the rest of us sitting on the bank of the river watching the steamboats going up and down. During this interval our new arrival, whom we called Jay Muleup, became acquainted with and married an Indian girl. This girl had been reared in an English mission at Fort Yukon.

Jay and I became acquainted and decided to take up the N. A. T. offer to build the log warehouses on a 50-50 basis for all costs and profts. His squaw wife was to do our cooking; the company agreed to grubstake us for the job and furnish a team of oxen to haul the logs out to water. The oxen were brought down from Circle City by steamboat and we mushed up the Yukon some 20 miles to good timber, where we made camp. We then cut and hauled to the water about 150 building logs. We had a few new experiences in rafting logs downriver, especially when trying to land them opposite where we had to haul them out. Our first raft of 75 logs was built wrong. The raft was too thick and not broad enough. We didn't find it out until we were in the shallow swift rapids, where we stuck fast, but by poling around we got it going again. In the channel of the swift current in front of the post we had some fun trying to get to shore and did not succeed until we were a half mile below town. Finally we snagged the raft to a tree root opposite a steep bank and had to use the oxen to haul the logs back up through the town to the post.

We received many a friendly jibe from the men about town as to what good rivermen and log drivers we were. However, when it came time to bring down the other raft, we had learned about everything there was to know from all the lumberjacks, steamboat men and miners about navigating a raft. So our second raft came through and landed just where we wanted it to land. We pulled $175 apiece out of the contract before cold weather set in, and had plenty of time to prepare for our winter prospecting trip.

During the time we were logging I learned that Jay's squaw wife was a fairly well educated girl who had received the regular school training under the instruction of the missionary and his wife. We also learned that she had a sister who was the wife of an old-time Yukon prospector who was up in the Chandalar country at the head of the Koyukuk River about 200 miles northwest of Fort Yukon, making observations and taking surface prospects with a view of spending the winter up there in real prospecting.

When our log building contract was finished and we got our money—which was enough to buy quite a good grubstake for the winter—it was proposed (we doing most of the proposing) that Jay and I join forces with the old sourdoughs in the return trip back up the Chandalar for the winter's prospecting. The others agreed and would also lend us their dog teams to pull our outfit up. We had to wait until they had mushed all their stuff up first. We were to follow them in about a week's time to bring the dog teams back for our outfit.

These men had been in the country for seven years and had been over the Klondike country long before that discovery was made public. They had traveled over the famous Eldorado and Bonanza Creeks to bar diggings beyond on Indian River. All of them were owners of grubstake claims in the Birch Creek district back of Circle City.

If the prospector has time in the summer, he will make a cruise to see the country and to study and locate the creek wash, the formations and surface indications, so as to know where to sink his prospect holes in the winter. When bed rock is deep and requires deep holes to be sunk, the ordinary prospector is not prepared in the summer to get to bed rock on account of water. Winter is the only time that a prospect hole 10 to 30 feet deep can be dug without machinery or much hard labor.

These four men had spent the previous winter on their own claims getting out a two years' grubstake, and they spent most of the summer up in this Chandalar country observing conditions, also shooting moose and caching the meat for winter dog feed. The fact that they were preparing to return to that country for the winter gave us reason to believe there was something pretty good up there.

The Chandalar River empties into the Yukon some 30 miles below Fort Yukon. Near its mouth these men had established a fish camp, where salmon were caught and dried for dog food. They had 21 dogs—which required a large amount of dog food to be laid in as each dog needs twice as much as a man. Jay had two dogs; I had none.

We had to go up with these men to bring their dogs down, as we were to use their dogs to haul our stuff up. They were to start hauling their outfits over the ice as soon as the river set fast. We were to float our ouftit down in boats, to the mouth, or to the camp, just before the big river froze and in this way save a 30-mile haul.

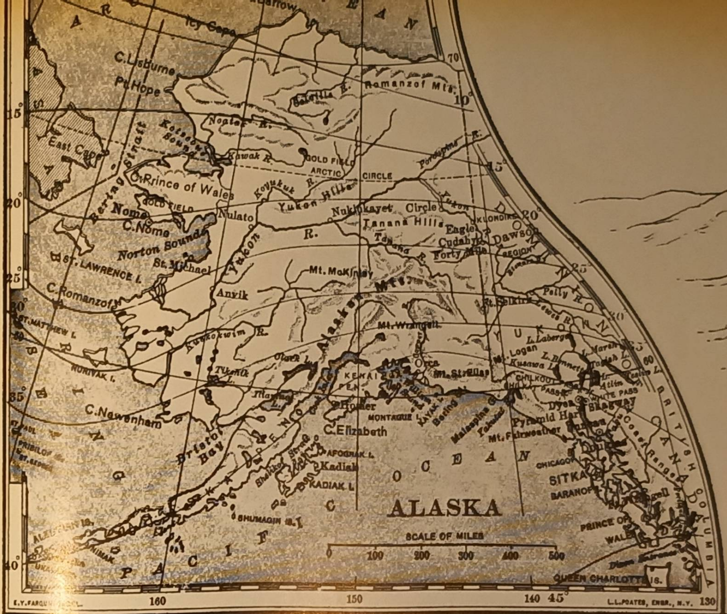
One night our outfit was made ready to pull out the first thing the next morning, as the ice was getting thicker in the river. The next morning it was nearly all slush ice. However, we thought to get through and made the start—much to our discomfort later. For within three miles of the fort our boats were nearly smashed while going down a sharp bend in the river. Slush ice packed in around us so tight that the sides were bent in, the boards cracked and started to leak.

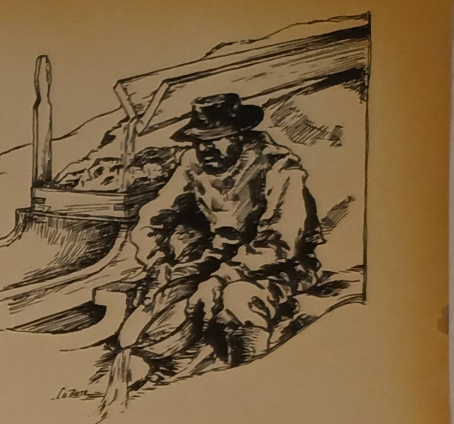
The slush would not admit the use of oars and was too soft to hold a pole. Our only salvation was to bail, drift downstream and try to get into open water. Suddenly it occurred to us that about six miles below was another very dangerous bend, where we were sure to lose our lives if we did not make shore before reaching it. Through good luck rather than management we came alongside of shore ice on an island only 500 yards above the bad bend.

An unknown author says, "Every man, going along living his life, conceives himself to be immortal. Death, the great accident, is something which happens to the other fellow."

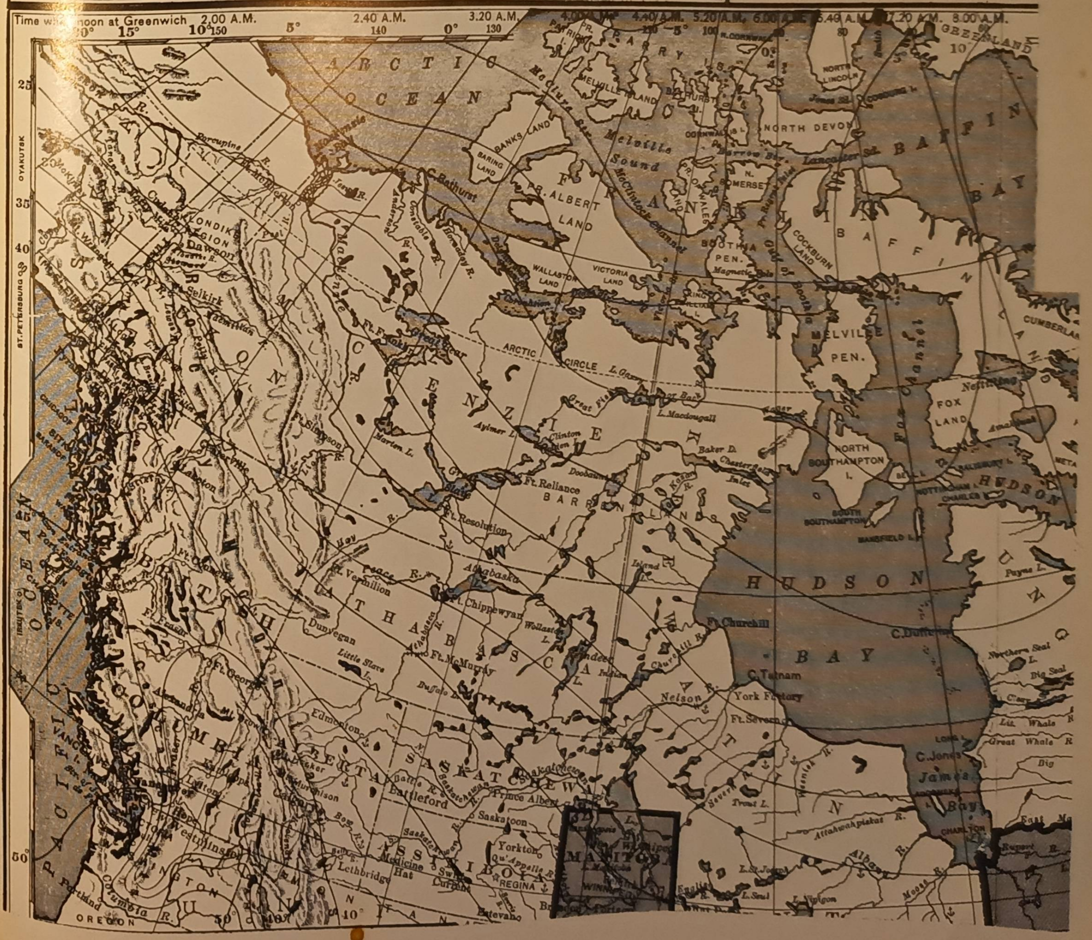
We realize

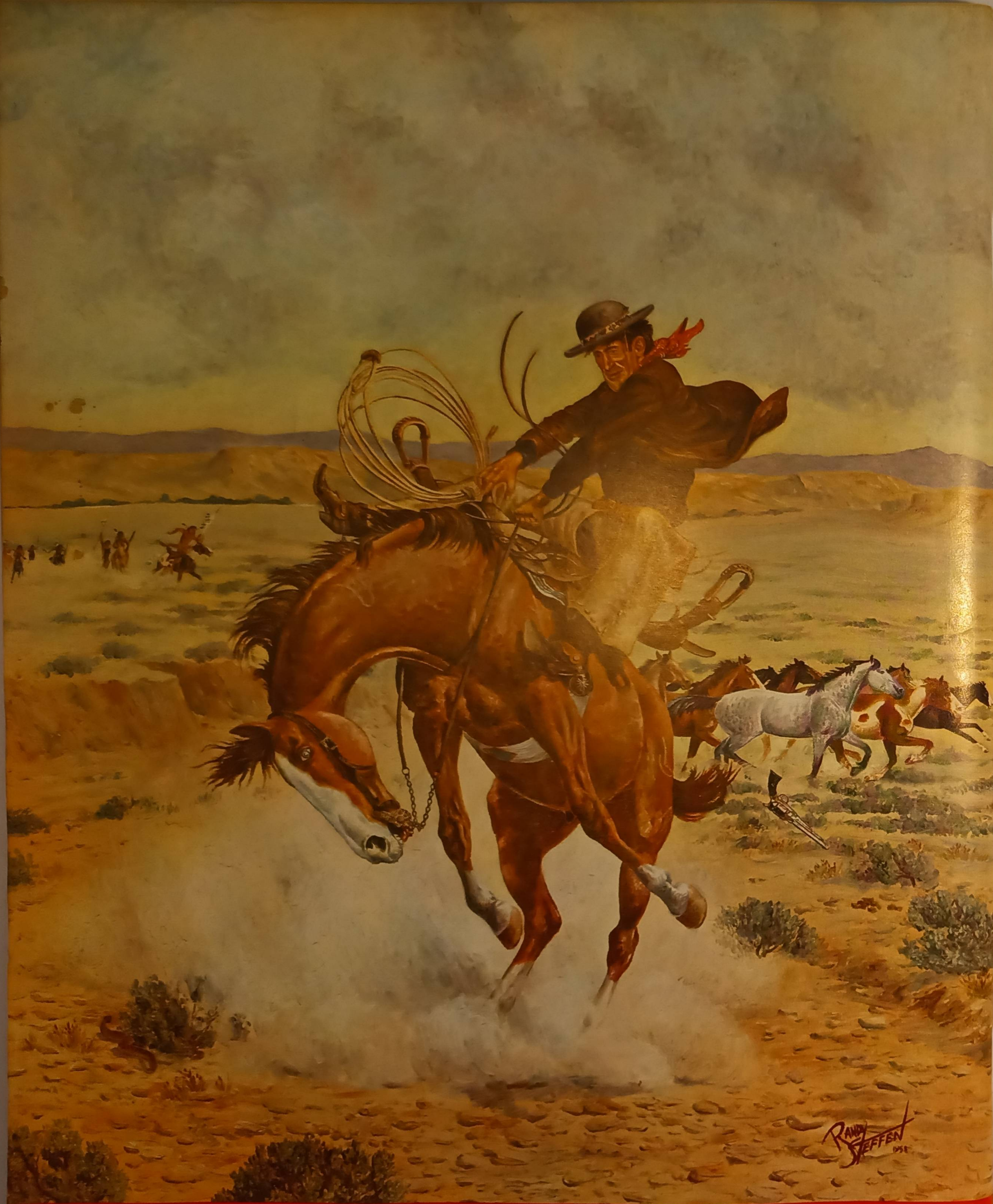
that running a book in two parts in a quarterly magazine makes a long wait for the ending, and our future plans do not call for breaking books up into parts. We made an exception in this case because condensing "Alaska Gold Trails" would have been criminal when this is the first opportunity anyone has ever had to read it in its entirety.





Map of Alaska and Northwest Canadian Frontier




Randy Steffen
1958

**Here is your front cover without print for framing purposes . . .
see page 1 for explanation on why we can't run it inside**